
* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
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* Issue 4 -- April 1993 Editor: Bruce Long *
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What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

What were issues 1-3 of TAYLOROLOGY? They were printed issues several years ago. The first issue reprinted the complete transcript of the Coroner's Inquest; that transcript was subsequently reprinted again in A DEED OF DEATH by Robert Giroux. The second issue had a list of over 100 possible errors found in Sidney Kirkpatrick's A CAST OF KILLERS; that list was expanded in the book WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (hereafter called WDT DOSSIER) by Bruce Long. The third issue was a large collection of press clippings pertaining to Taylor's life in Hollywood; those clippings (and many more) were all reprinted in WDT DOSSIER. Because the essence of those first three issues can be found in hardcover, there are no present plans to reprint those issues here.

Reader input is welcome, in the form of "Letters to the Editor," short articles, and contributed source material.

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A Few Murder Suspects

Within a few years of the murder, the press had printed a wide range of rumors and speculations about Taylor's death. The endnotes indicate sample references for each theory. It was suggested that Taylor was killed by:

1. A jealous woman:
 - a. Actress Mabel Normand [1]
 - b. Screenwriter Julia Crawford Ivers [2]
 - c. An unidentified woman (many variations) [3]
2. A jealous man who was in love with one of Taylor's female friends:
 - a. Producer Mack Sennett [4]
 - b. Director Marshall Neilan [5]
 - c. Pencil-fortune heir Tommy Dixon [6]
 - d. Actor Rudolph Valentino [7]
 - e. Albert Sans [8]
 - d. An unidentified man (many variations) [9]
3. Taylor's ex-servant, Edward F. Sands [10]
4. A member of a mystic homosexual opium cult [11]
5. An unidentified blackmailer [12]
6. A Canadian soldier whom Taylor had court-martialed during World War I [13]
7. Noted prohibition gangster "Dapper Don" Collins [14]
8. Taylor's servant, Henry Peavey [15]
9. A burglar [16]
10. A drug peddler whose trade Taylor had interfered with
 - a. Wong Lee [17]
 - b. Tom Wah [18]
 - c. Harry Lee [19]

- d. Jack Kramer [20]
 - e. "Morphine Mose" [21]
 - f. An unidentified drug peddler (many variations) [22]
11. A gang of bootleggers whom Taylor had threatened for attempting to sell him inferior liquor [23]
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 14. A small child, accidentally [26]
 15. Taylor's brother, Denis Deane-Tanner [27]
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 24. Someone Taylor asked to kill him [36]
 25. An actor whom Taylor had rejected for a film role [37]
 26. Newspaperman Honore Connette [38]
 27. Actor Gareth Hughes [39]
 28. The Ku-Klux-Klan [40]
 29. A deranged drug addict [41]
 30. Aleister Crowley's Ordo-Templi-Orientis [42]
 31. Songwriter Vincent Bryan [43]
 32. Walter Kirby [44]
 33. Mr. Anderson [45]
 34. Taxi driver Daniel O'Shea [46]

35. A lunatic movie fan [47]
36. A friend of the person victimized by Peavey [48]
37. A movie man verbally branded a "slacker" (for avoiding military service in World War I) by Taylor [49]
38. Others unidentified [50]

Fragments from Taylor's Life

November 27, 1920

Ray Davidson

DRAMATIC MIRROR

The growth and development of motion pictures have disclosed one outstanding fact--that the successful film director MUST know life. If dealing with one particular phase his knowledge of that angle should be perfect. And of course it stands to reason that the man of widest experience is best able to accurately reproduce the humanities of a story.

How many times one hears, "I don't think the maker of that picture was ever inside of a mine" or "Certainly English society doesn't act like THAT!" and so on as various discrepancies are flashed on the screen.

"To portray life--one must have lived it."

Certainly this axiom proves especially true in the case of William D. Taylor, now a producer of special productions for Realart. Mr. Taylor has gained a very particular reputation for human photoplays, plays of real people acting in a real way under different circumstances. He will be particularly remembered for HUCKLEBERRY FINN, TOM SAWYER, THE VARMINT, THE SOUL OF YOUTH, THE FURNACE and a score of other pictures, all of them remarkable for their reality.

The reason is not far to seek. For certainly of all the present day producers Mr. Taylor stands foremost in the matter of life experiences. Successively Irish student, Kansas rancher, Klondike miner, construction engineer of large industrial projects, actor and director of film features, he has encompassed an unusual segment of human activity.

Mr. Taylor was born on the country estate of his grandfather, near

Mallows [sic] in County Cork, Ireland. His mother was an Irish gentlewoman, his father a Colonel of English troops. The elder wished his son to become an army officer and in preparation he was sent to Clifton College for preparatory work in engineering, then going to Germany and France for training in those countries.

Always, however, he had been fond of the play and cherished ambitions to tread in the footsteps of Sir Henry Irving and others. His father frowned severely upon anything connected with the stage and discouraged these ambitions.

Shortly after his eighteenth birthday the Young Taylor was in Manchester, England, when the famous Charles Hawtry was appearing in THE PRIVATE SECRETARY. The present film producer applied to Hawtrey, told him he had "lots of experience"--and was given a small part.

Friends of the family saw him on the stage in London and called his father post-haste. The result was that the boy was banished to a farm at Harper, Kansas!

This did not cure him, however, for after a year and a half farming he signed to play with Fanny Davenport, taking for three seasons the juveniles in such well-known old plays as LA TOSCA, GISMONDA, FEDORA, CLEOPATRA and JOAN OF ARC.

Miss Davenport's death and the Klondike rush came simultaneously. Remembering he was a licensed engineer he went north, made and lost a fortune--and then returned to play with Sol Smith Russell, Castle Square (Boston) stock and in the leading roles of such famous old productions as MEN AND WOMEN, BUTTERFLIES, THE GIRL WITH THE GREEN EYES, SOWING THE WIND and MADAME SANS GENE. After this came another trip to the Klondike, a barnstorming engagement to the Orient with Harry Corson Clarke and on return he built a big paper mill at Swanson Bay, B.C.

Shortly after this he entered motion pictures with the old Kay Bee, doing THE ICONOCLAST. Then came engagements with Ince and Vicagraph. Balboa gave him his first chance to direct. He made five pictures with them, then going to American for production of the famous old sixty-reel serial DIAMOND

FROM THE SKY. By this time he had become a seasoned director, signing with the Famous Players-Lasky Corporation with whom he remained until his affiliation with Realart.

Among the pictures he did for Famous were DAVY CROCKETT and PARSON OF PANAMINT, Dustin Farnum; PASQUALE, George Beban; REDEEMING LOVE, OUT OF THE WRECK, Kathlyn Williams; THE WORLD APART, Wallace Reid; JACK AND JILL; THE VARMINT, MILE A MINUTE KENDALL, Jack Pickford and Louise Huff; UP THE ROAD WITH SALLIE, Constance Talmadge; HOU COULD YOU JEAN?, JOHANNA ENLISTS, Mary Pickford. For Realart he has done ANNE OF GREEN GABLES, JUDY OF ROGUE'S HARBOR, NURSE MARJORIE and JENNY BE GOOD with Mary Miles Minter and in his own right, THE SOUL OF YOUTH, THE FURNACE and THE WITCHING HOUR.

Mr. Taylor is very grateful that he has had a life of such unusual variety.

"I find use every day for some phase of it," he tells his friends. "It is an invaluable possession to a man called upon to reproduce real life. A story can't be presented on the screen in a human, gripping manner unless the director has been actually in contact with the situations depicted. A director of limited human experience must sooner or later 'come a cropper'. It is a profession which demands the knowing of something about a great many people and things.

"For instance--I never thought at the time that being marooned all one winter in the backwoods of Alaska would be one of the most valuable things that could have happened to me. It was a terrible period. I had only a train of sledge dogs for company. But it was being with these dogs so constantly that gave me a love for animals, an ability to handle them. It has been said that I have been exceptionally successful in the use of 'animal stuff' in pictures. If this is so--it is entirely do to the six months alone with the dogs.

"Army life? My father was a military man and I served in the British army. Mining, fishing, hunting, construction of industrial projects? When such problems come up there is always a niche somewhere in my memory which has stored up the information wanted.

"How would a man act if he were about to be killed by a crazy man--or in danger of death from any source? I can assuredly answer the first part of that question--and tell my players should such a situation arise in the stories I do. For while in the Klondike one time my cabin was entered by a man who calmly announced that he was going to kill me, quoting certain passages from the Bible as authority. I took down a Bible--showed him where his quotation was wrong--and he forgot all about the killing!

"But that's only by way of illustration. Life isn't made up of such melodramatic incidents. Mostly it flows along smoothly with certain characteristics in youth, maturity and middle age. There are some features in life that are the same anywhere--others are different according to locality. I found a month's hunting and fishing trip along the Mississippi River invaluable in working out the character of 'Huckleberry Finn'--assuring its accuracy. For certainly the boy of the Big River has different pleasures than the boy of Massachusetts, say.

"In the same manner the memory of fashionable London in my father's time helped immeasurably in making correct the English society scenes of THE FURNACE.

"A man must know these things himself to get them right. All the technical directors in the world won't help if the man who is making the picture doesn't know LIFE as it really is."

Again comes the original statement, "To portray life--one must have lived it." Certainly this has proven true of William D. Taylor, student, engineer, miner, farmer, actor and director of feature productions.

Such variety in life is bound to be reflected in Mr. Taylor's productions. They will teem with real life and real people because he has lived life among real people. He has been through the tempestuous school of experience the slogan of which is "the survival of the fittest." Naturally he brings the fruit of his knowledge to his directorial tasks. And that is why one is very apt to see the absorbing, the natural, the life-like pervading his photoplays.

Take THE FURNACE which is being shown in New York. It is a story

purporting to show the trials and tribulations of people who enter the state of matrimony, some to be burnt beyond recognition, others to be purified by the scorching fire of successful adjustment to new and strange conditions. Mr. Taylor sought to get away from the conventional. He wanted to do a big theme in a big way. And he succeeded, because he was true to his purpose. He was conscientious to a fault in bringing out domestic detail, in fitting the action to the titles.

And it has been this way with Mr. Taylor throughout his motion picture career. And his picturesque life has lent color to his productions that they would not otherwise have had. No details of life on the farm or in the mine, in college, on the stage are lacking in truthfulness in the films that he directs. He sees to that. The result is a picture in which the human quality is uppermost. And when photoplays reflect this human quality they are art. Trust William D. Taylor! He is a sincere and intelligent director. He believes in motion pictures. And motion pictures will be the greater because of him.

Suggested Reading

For those interested in additional information about Taylor, particularly the famous murder which ended his life, the following sources may prove useful. Most published recaps of the murder are filled with errors and all information must be carefully sifted for accuracy. In addition to the sources listed below, many books have chapters on the Taylor murder (including HOLLYWOOD HEARTBREAK, TALES FROM THE HOLLYWOOD RAJ, ACTS OF MURDER, WHODUNIT?--HOLLYWOOD STYLE, HOLLYWOOD R.I.P., KILLERS UNKNOWN, TEN REAL MURDER MYSTERIES, CELEBRITY MURDERS, UNSOLVED MYSTERIES, etc.), but they are not listed below because they add nothing to the established literature, and are filled with the usual errors--the same can be said of the many discussions of the case in "crime encyclopedias." Of course the original news papers of the time are also very useful; in addition to the five Los Angeles papers of 1922 (TIMES, EXAMINER, RECORD, HERALD, EXPRESS) the CHICAGO AMERICAN must be seen for its ultra-sensational coverage.

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Most Valuable Sources:

Robert Giroux, *A DEED OF DEATH* (Knopf, 1990). Well-written recap of the case, superb photo selection. Includes the complete transcript of the coroner's inquest, and an index. This book advocates the theory that Taylor was killed by drug gangsters; the only major fault in the book is that the Shelby-as-killer theory is too quickly brushed aside.

Sidney Kirkpatrick, *A CAST OF KILLERS* (Dutton, 1986). Contains some material from the police file, and many rumors attempting to prove that Charlotte Shelby killed Taylor. This book was a best-seller and was followed by paperback editions containing minor revisions.

Bruce Long, *WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER* (Scarecrow, 1991). Includes recaps of the case written by two detectives involved in the investigation, and extensive annotated criticism of the Kirkpatrick and Giroux books.

Mack Sennett and Cameron Shipp, *KING OF COMEDY* (Doubleday, 1954). This book has three chapters on the murder, including some transcripts from the District Attorney's file which have not been published elsewhere.

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General Recaps of the Taylor Murder (Often Error-Filled):

Kenneth Anger, *HOLLYWOOD BABYLON* (Straight Arrow, 1975), pp. 32- 41.

Harry Carr, "Who Killed William Desmond Taylor?" *SCREEN SECRETS* (April 1929) pp. 24ff.

William H. A. Carr, *HOLLYWOOD TRAGEDY* (Fawcett Crest, 1976), pp. 49-72.

Betty Harper Fussell, *MABEL* (Ticknor & Fields, 1982). Better than most

others.

Erle Stanley Gardner, "William Desmond Taylor," THE LOS ANGELES MURDERS, ed. by Craig Rice (Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1947), pp. 85-119.

Alan Hynd, "Murder in Hollywood," AMERICAN MERCURY (November 1949), pp. 594-601.

Morris Markey, "Who Killed William Desmond Taylor?" ESQUIRE (November 1950), pp. 65ff.

Colleen Moore, SILENT STAR (Doubleday, 1968), pp. 78-89.

Ellery Queen, "The Taylor Case: The Murder Hollywood Can't Forget," AMERICAN WEEKLY (October 26, 1952).

Capt. J. A. Winn, "Who Killed William Desmond Taylor?" FRONT PAGE DETECTIVE (June 1937) pp. 56ff.

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Special Material Pertaining to the Murder:

Frank Bartholomew, BART: MEMOIRS OF FRANK H. BARTHOLOMEW (Vine Press, 1983), pp. 26-27. A reporter's memoirs.

Kevin Brownlow, HOLLYWOOD: THE PIONEERS (Knopf, 1979), p. 112. Brief statement by Mary Miles Minter.

Edward Doherty, GALL AND HONEY (Sheed & Ward, 1941), pp. 196-202. A reporter's memoirs.

Charles Higham, CELEBRITY CIRCUS (Delacorte, 1979), pp. 109-117. Rare interview with Mary Miles Minter.

Edward Knoblock, ROUND THE ROOM (Chapman and Hall, 1939), pp. 306-308. He lived in Taylor's house at the time of Sands' theft.

Bruce Long, "The William Desmond Taylor Murder Case," CLASSIC FILM COLLECTOR (Winter 1977) pp.24-32. Reprints statements made by many Hollywood celebrities after the murder.

Florabel Muir, HEADLINE HAPPY (Holt, 1950), pp. 100-102. A reporter's memoirs.

Adela Rogers St. Johns, THE HONEYCOMB (Doubleday, 1969), pp. 106-110. A reporter's memoirs.

Sidney Sutherland, "Mabel Normand--Comedienne and Madcap," LIBERTY (Sept. 27 and Oct. 4, 1930). Mabel Normand's most detailed statement of her activities on the day Taylor died.

Walter Wagner, YOU MUST REMEMBER THIS (G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1975), pp. 81-83. Statement by Claire Windsor.

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Taylor's Film Career and History:

Truman B. Handy, "The Colorful and Romantic Story of William D. Taylor's Remarkable Life," MOVIE WEEKLY (March 18, 25, April 1, 8, 15, 1922). Highly fanciful version of Taylor's life story.

Richard Koszarski, "The William Desmond Taylor Mystery," GRIFFITHIANA (October 1990), pp. 253-256. Critical examination of Taylor's extant films.

Bruce Long, "Julia Crawford Ivers, circa: The Taylor Murder," CLASSIC IMAGES (December 1985). Reprints items pertaining to Taylor's main screenwriter, and

her thoughts about Taylor.

Douglas J. Whitton, "The Career of William Desmond Taylor," CLASSIC IMAGES (February, March, April 1983).

Richard Willis, "William D. Taylor," MOVIE PICTORIAL (June 6, 1914).

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Fictionalizations of the Murder (entertainment value only):

Dewitt Bodeen, 13 CASTLE WALK (Pyramid, 1975).

G.M. Bumpus, THE MAN WHO KILLED: THE SOLUTION OF HOLLYWOOD'S GREATEST MURDER MYSTERY (Logan Dillon, 1945).

J.E. Chrisman, "The Taylor Murder Case as a Fiction Thriller," MOTION PICTURE (Aug. 1931) pp. 32ff. Mystery writer S. S. Van Dine (author of the "Philo Vance" series) speculates about dramatizing the case.

Kim Deitch, "The Mysterious Death of William Desmond Taylor," SLEAZY SCANDALS OF THE SILVER SCREEN (Cartoonists Co-Op Press, 1974).

H. L. Gates, "Has Mabel Normand Solved the Taylor Murder?" ILLUSTRATED DETECTIVE MAGAZINE (Nov. 1931- Jan. 1932).

Franklin Hall, BEN TURPIN, PRIVATE EYE (Aran, 1985).

Gavin Lambert, RUNNING TIME (MacMillan, 1983).

Samuel A. Peeples, THE MAN WHO DIED TWICE (G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1976).

Gore Vidal, HOLLYWOOD (Random House, 1990).

"The Humor of a Hollywood Murder"

by Bruce Long

(This was originally intended to be a book published in hardcopy form, but efforts to find a publisher were unsuccessful. So it will be serialized within this newsletter.)

Foreword

by Kevin Brownlow

No amount of money would have induced me to write an introduction to a book about the "humour" of the Taylor case. But Bruce Long tempted me with copies of exceptionally rare 1913 issues of Photoplay, and as the saying went in Hollywood in those days, the only way to cope with temptation is to give in to it.

Few of Taylor's films survive, but I was very impressed with his 1920 production of "Soul of Youth," about juvenile delinquency, made with an almost Dickensian feel for the squalor and brutality of reform schools.

But my interest in Taylor lies beyond his work. My friend Liam O'Leary once took a picture of the house in Cappoquin, Co Waterford where Taylor grew up. I showed it to my wife, Virginia, and she had to sit down. It was the same house in which she had grown up. His family, the Deane-Tanners, were Anglo-Irish landowners; it is perfectly accurate to call him "British" but it would be closer to the truth to call him Anglo-Irish. They were a special breed, dying out now, but worthy of a few volumes of their own. (My wife's brother, Molly Keane, has done sterling work in this regard, but she recalls the Deane-Tanners only vaguely from her youth, and feels there are dark deeds associated with them.)

The Irish are the most humorous people imaginable, and had Taylor survived the shooting, he might have cracked some jokes about it. Somehow, the idea of the press finding humour in the event causes one less amusement

than indignation. America's yellow press, particularly the tabloids owned by Hearst, were far worse than anything represented by Hollywood. How they got away with their repellent stories, gory photographs and sanctimonious hypocrisy, while women's clubs got steamed up about the charming love-making of silent films, is beyond me.

On the other hand, this is the press of The Front Page era; you can imagine the tough reporters, their hats tilted back on their head, swigging their prohibition gin from hip flasks, their prose flushing as purple as their noses. This book is a fascinating comment on American society.

Introduction

by Bruce Long

On the surface there was nothing whatsoever amusing about the unsolved cold-blooded murder of top Hollywood film director William Desmond Taylor on February 1, 1922. The single gunshot which punctured his left lung not only ended Taylor's life but also helped ruin the careers of two top female stars and fueled unprecedented public outcry against Hollywood. Most of the nation was not amused; Hollywood certainly was not. But as days passed and the many bizarre threads of the case came to light, more and more humorous commentary began to appear in the press.

The Taylor case has been written about many times and has inspired three full-length books, but authors have generally ignored the humor inspired by the case. This series is a collection of that original humorous press material.

The Hollywood film industry has come under verbal public attack at various times throughout its existence, but those attacks were never greater than in the month following Taylor's murder. The revelations accompanying the Taylor case prompted the disclosure of other sensational allegations against Hollywood, and national anti-Hollywood sentiment peaked at this time.

Subsequently, Will Hays assumed control of the movie industry and was able to

placate much of the anti-Hollywood sentiment. With the passage of time, public morality changed and people were no longer so outraged by the activities of the film colony. The humorous aspects of that anti-Hollywood sentiment falls within the scope of this series.

A substantial part of this series contains "unintentional humor" which was intended to be taken very seriously, but which nevertheless may seem to be amusing from our current perspective.

Some of the material has been edited, and some material has been arbitrarily assigned to one chapter instead of another because there is some overlapping of subject matter.

A few stereotyped comments which are offensive today but were relatively commonplace in 1922 have been included for historical purposes.

It should be kept in mind that the material presented in this series has been selected for humor, not for veracity. Incidents and characterizations should not be blindly accepted as fact. This volume contains very little factual information about the Taylor case, but a great deal of information about the social and cultural attitudes of the press, the public and Hollywood in the aftermath of Taylor's murder. It is hoped that this series, while presenting a substantial collection of source material useful to scholars, will also be entertaining and humorous by today's standards.

Prologue

February 15, 1922

Alvaro Shoemaker

SEATTLE UNION-RECORD

We ought to be glad this thing happened down in Los Angeles--that is, glad that it happened in Los Angeles instead of Seattle. It was a "big" murder, as the news boys put it, and--like all big things--we need the distance to give us a proper perspective.

We were just about to despair of the movies giving us any thrills other than those in the films themselves.

Fatty Arbuckle gave us a good show--while it lasted. [51] But he has gone through his second trial, and it drew so poorly that District Attorney Brady threatens positively to withdraw it after one more performance.

Things were slowing up badly. California was having a rotten winter. Tourists were leaving.

And then--

Action! Action!

William Desmond Taylor, world's greatest movie director, British army captain, art connoisseur, traveler, dilettante, divorcee, bon vivant, occultist, et cetera, et cetera, as well as sole proprietor of the finest, best appointed, most frequently visited and most generously occupied love nest in the city of Los Angeles--William Desmond Taylor, Love Avalanche of Alvarado, [52] is found dead!

Once again Los Angeles triumphed over her ancient, jealous sister. San Francisco could claim the Arbuckle affair. It was small, sordid; did not offer the element of mystery; just a plain drunk, with a killing for a chaser. Bah!

In Los Angeles a real he-man bit the dust--a sure-enough lady killer, with more handkerchiefs, gloves, powder puffs and pale-and-thin lingerie in his trophy list than an Arbuckle could ever hope to bag with all the seeming advantage of superior booze and top weight.

And compare the women in the case. Fatty's list of "those present" might be the register of the Home for Dessicated, Debilitated and Flatfooted Hashers. Who remembers them? Fatty had to bait with booze for his moths in order to get them to circulate around the formless, only partly combustible hunk of tallow that was Arbuckle, in the hope that one at least might get drunk enough to fall in.

Now look--if your eyes be not too dazzled--look, look at the lambent flame of Desmond Taylor. Mark that classy galaxy that moves in queenly strides around the central orb. Think you they are drawn and held by sordid things? Not so. S'love, s'love!

The Arbuckle setting was one of corks, empties, cigarette butts and

katzenjammers. [53]

Taylor died surrounded by incense, code love notes, monogramed hankies and pink teddy-bears. [54]

The sauce piquante of the Taylor affair would be a fetching dressing to pour over even the classiest of chicken served up on the silver screen.

Bon Mots

February 4, 1922

DES MOINES REGISTER

The recent movie tragedy was too realistic for the director's health.

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February 4, 1922

PITTSBURGH SUN

It is absolutely useless for anyone to try to compete with the movie folks for front page scandal position.

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February 4, 1922

KANSAS CITY STAR

The late Mr. Taylor, movie director, was known among his friends as being "very reserved." So, apparently, is his murderer.

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February 4, 1922

OMAHA BEE

Nothing shown on the screen has so far exceeded in weirdness the things actually done by the movie players.

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February 6, 1922

RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH

The question now is, who saw Director Taylor last. Until recently, the burning issue among the movie queens was, who saw him first.

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February 6, 1922

MEMPHIS NEWS SCIMITAR

The latest angle to the movie murder in Los Angeles is that the victim led a double life. Those double lives have an unhappy way of leading to a single grave.

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February 6, 1922

PITTSBURGH SUN

Strange that the movie stars should be resenting all this fine advertising the Taylor case offers them.

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February 6, 1922

NASHVILLE TENNESSEAN

The shooting of a movie director has caused considerable disturbance in Los Angeles. Must have shot the wrong one.

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February 7, 1922

NASHVILLE BANNER

Every cloud has a silver lining. For instance, the publicity department of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce takes a rest every time there is a Hollywood mystery murder.

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February 7, 1922

DES MOINES TRIBUNE

Surely one of those wonderful movie detectives ought to be able to solve the movie murder mystery.

* * * * *

February 7, 1922

BALTIMORE EVENING SUN

And if the authorities are not careful, the Associated Drug Peddlers of Hollywood will become offended and leave.

* * * * *

February 7, 1922

SAVANNAH NEWS

It is suggested that in the movie business Will Hays may have more trouble handling the females than he had in moving the mails. [55]

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February 7, 1922

PITTSBURGH SUN

Nowadays a great many screen luminaries are being tried and found wanton. [56]

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February 8, 1922

TOPEKA CAPITAL

Adolph Zukor says that the Hollywood movie colony is no worse, morally, than the stock exchange colony on Wall Street. We have always suspected as much.

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February 8, 1922

BOSTON HERALD

A "gruelling" examination, as the police employ the term, is one expected to put its recipient in the soup.

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February 8, 1922

PITTSBURGH POST

Only by the exercise of supreme self-restraint has Congress refrained so far from appointing a commission to go on a California excursion to investigate picture studio shenanigan.

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February 9, 1922

INDIANAPOLIS STAR

A movie funeral seems to be one thing that will get the Los Angeles people out to church.

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February 9, 1922
KANSAS CITY STAR

The roisterers who lived in the Roman empire days weren't pikers at heart. They did the best they could, but were handicapped by the fact that chemistry and drugs had not been perfected up to the Hollywood stage.

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February 9, 1922
DALLAS TIMES-HERALD

One man suggests that Motion Picture Director Taylor was killed by some actor to whom he refused to give a job. Once in a while the public feel that way about an actor who has been given a job.

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February 9, 1922
INDIANAPOLIS NEWS

The persistent claim of Los Angeles that it is different from the rest of the world is now conceded.

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February 10, 1922
PASADENA STAR-NEWS

The person who is liable to be murdered mysteriously in Los Angeles should take good care to bury his or her family skeleton too deep for resurrection.

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February 10, 1922
COLUMBIA STATE

In the modern murder case it is not only cherchez la femme, but cherchez la lingerie.

* * * * *

February 10, 1922
DETROIT FREE PRESS

Those opium parties which are said to have been given in the movie

centers of California must have one advantage over the ordinary kind in that no guests can be accused of impoliteness if he goes to sleep.

February 10, 1922
KANSAS CITY STAR

Los Angeles means "The City of the Angels." Fallen angels, huh?

February 10, 1922
PASADENA STAR-NEWS

The person who is fortunate enough to escape being killed in traffic in Los Angeles, may become the victim of a mysterious murder.

February 10, 1922
COLUMBIA STATE

"Taylor's Slayer 'Unknown Person' Verdict Declares." Apparently that lets out everybody connected with the film industry.

February 11, 1922
WICHITA EAGLE

The father of Mary Miles Minter, who is a newspaper proof-reader, says it's all a mistake about Mary. Thinks it a typographical error, doubtless.

February 11, 1922
DALLAS NEWS

Life insurance agents should find Hollywood a receptive field now.

February 11, 1922
SEATTLE UNION-RECORD

Cheer up, you old birds. Look at the kick murdered Film Director Taylor was getting out of life at the age of 50.

February 11, 1922

DES MOINES TRIBUNE

Incidentally, the Hollywood tragedy has brought home to some women the advisability of omitting initials from nighties.

* * * * *

FEBRUARY 11, 1922

Helena Independent

The serial "Gumming up the Cops" seems to be in full rehearsal at Hollywood.

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February 11, 1922

PHILADELPHIA RECORD

"May Never Solve Taylor Mystery," says the headline. No, but we're learning a lot about Mr. Taylor and his friends.

* * * * *

February 11, 1922

INDIANAPOLIS STAR

In their efforts to dissect the Taylor case the authorities are finding too many knots in Hollywood.

* * * * *

February 11, 1922

OAKLAND TRIBUNE

As for the movies, they would better take Hays while there are stars to shine. [57]

* * * * *

February 11, 1922

SEATTLE UNION-RECORD

Editor contemplates abandoning his Back to Nature Society and starting a Hollywood Movie Colony. Thinks he'll get more of a kick out of it--more nature.

* * * * *

February 12, 1922

DES MOINES REGISTER

Houseman Peavey appears to be the innocent Negro in the Hollywood pile.

[58]

* * * * *

February 12, 1922

NEW ORLEANS STATES

It seems that California would be perfectly happy if she could find a way to get rid of the Hollywood colony of movie stars without losing, at the same time, the money they spend.

* * * * *

February 12, 1922

ST. LOUIS STAR

After all the bizarre stuff that is being written about the Taylor murder we wouldn't be surprised to find out that he isn't dead.

* * * * *

February 12, 1922

WICHITA EAGLE

With the whole biographical dictionary to choose from, the great movie director chose for himself the name of Bill Taylor. Democratic soul!

* * * * *

February 12, 1922

DALLAS NEWS

We wish Hollywouldn't.

* * * * *

February 13, 1922

KANSAS CITY STAR

The movie folks imagine that they have been picked upon to carry the blame for all modern humanity's depravity, but they are mistaken. They are expected to bear the blame for only half of it. The jazz producers will carry the other half.

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February 13, 1922

PASADENA STAR-NEWS

The William D. Taylor murder mystery is becoming a graveyard of reputations.

* * * * *

February 13, 1922

BOSTON HERALD

And fast earning the name of Follywood.

* * * * *

February 13, 1922

KANSAS CITY STAR

The suggestion to burn Hollywood up--or down--would be well enough, were it not for the suspicion gained from current dispatches that Hollywood is too "wet" to burn. [59]

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February 14, 1922

BOSTON TRANSCRIPT

If Hollywood wants a new name, what about Whollybad?

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February 14, 1922

DES MOINES TRIBUNE

There is this to be said about the Hollywood affair from the newspaper folks' standpoint. It was not a difficult matter to get hold of pictures of the various persons involved.

* * * * *

February 14, 1922

SEATTLE STAR

Every time there is a shooting scrape in the movie colony some screen star finds out where the rest of her clothes are.

* * * * *

February 14, 1922

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

If it were as easy to catch murderers as it is to discover claimants for estates of murdered men, detectives would find their occupations gone.

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February 14, 1922

NASHVILLE BANNER

To paraphrase an old saying: "See Hollywood and die." [60]

* * * * *

February 14, 1922

HOUSTON POST

Carl Laemmle says only a few of the film stars are bad. The worst of it is, some good stars are bad and some bad stars are good.

* * * * *

February 14, 1922

LOUISVILLE TIMES

If William Desmond Taylor had married all the women to whom he is reported to have been engaged, he would not have been murdered. He would have been safe in the penitentiary.

* * * * *

February 14, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO BULLETIN

"Do you know who killed Taylor?" Jack Dempsey was asked.

"Sure. Everyone knows that Volstead killed Old Taylor," he answered. [61]

* * * * *

February 15, 1922

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

If Hollywood wants to keep strictly up to date, it ought to devise a theory that will make the sun spots responsible.

* * * * *

February 15, 1922

SYRACUSE POST-STANDARD

We ought to have a pretty clean sort of a country after the police get through scouring, sweeping and combing it for the slayer of a movie director.

* * * * *

February 15, 1922

Tom Cannon

GARY POST-TRIBUNE

Probably the best thing about Hollywood is the first car out of town.

* * * * *

February 15, 1922

NEW YORK MAIL

The girl who's born to blush unseen will never be a movie queen.

* * * * *

February 16, 1922

PORTLAND JOURNAL

To someone somewhere the Taylor murder mystery is not a mystery.

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February 16, 1922

DES MOINES TRIBUNE

The detectives who are at work on the Taylor case evidently couldn't solve a mystery in a 300 page novel.

* * * * *

February 16, 1922

Joe Webb

AUSTIN AMERICAN

If Mabel Normand's press agent got a bonus for each time her picture appeared in a paper, he probably made several fortunes last week.

* * * * *

February 16, 1922

BOSTON ADVERTISER

Police in Hollywood have not thought of questioning the movie bathing girls. Experience proves they conceal little.

* * * * *

February 16, 1922

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

A few more "close-ups" of Hollywood and there will be a demand to close up Hollywood.

* * * * *

February 17, 1922

DES MOINES REGISTER

"Well, anyhow," commented the barber shop philosopher, "Mary Miles Minter, Mabel Normand and a few other movie stars are not hand-me-downs. They are Taylor maids."

* * * * *

February 17, 1922

MIAMI HERALD

The movies are often called an infant industry, but they seem to have gotten well past the milk stage, judging from the reports from Hollywood.

* * * * *

February 17, 1922

ST. PAUL PIONEER PRESS

Movie men's utterances make one feel that some excellent bishops have been lost in very mediocre screen directors.

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February 18, 1922

MIAMI HERALD

From the lack of progress in the investigation of the Taylor murder we are beginning to wonder why they call it a "motion" picture tragedy.

* * * * *

February 18, 1922

DES MOINES REGISTER

If the late Director Taylor were to return and read all the stuff passing as his life history, he would probably fail to recognize himself.

* * * * *

February 18, 1922

ARKANSAS GAZETTE

Los Angeles dispatch says Mabel Normand's chauffeur was "placed on the grill." Why not on the radiator?

* * * * *

February 18, 1922

TAMPA TRIBUNE

None of the stars whose names have been connected with the Taylor mystery has complained as yet about somebody else having been given a more prominent part.

* * * * *

February 19, 1922

KANSAS CITY STAR

You may have your prejudices against the Hollywood school of acting, but you must admit that a lot of actors are coming out of there very definitely finished.

* * * * *

February 19, 1922

NASHVILLE BANNER

A paragrapher declares that if all the pink pyjamas in Hollywood were placed end to end they would reach from Sodom to Gomorrah. More than that, even from Dan to Beersheba, from Cape Cod to Kalamazoo, or, as a certain enthusiastic politician once expressed distance, "from hell to breakfast."

* * * * *

February 19, 1922

Otis Lorton

TULSA WORLD

Mr. Sands, late of Los Angeles, is just about the most retiring, modest and unobtrusive butler we ever heard of.

* * * * *

February 20, 1922

LOUISVILLE TIMES

Residents of Hollywood, Illinois, want to change the name of their town. Of course, they would never listen to such suggestions as Taylorsville, Normandy or Mintersburg.

* * * * *

February 20, 1922

BOSTON ADVERTISER

Every once in awhile we hear of a new slang expression. "Do tell," is now the favorite in Hollywood.

* * * * *

February 20, 1922

KANSAS CITY STAR

In the past, when a person or an institution passes from our view, we have been in the habit of saying "so-and-so has gone to join the dodo." Hereafter, we shall say it has gone to join Arbuckle, Minter, Normand & Co.

* * * * *

February 21, 1922

SEATTLE UNION-RECORD

Looks like some Hollywood headliners will soon be breadliners.

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February 21, 1922

MIAMI HERALD

Great progress has been made in solving the Hollywood murder case. The detectives have about decided that Taylor was killed.

* * * * *

February 22, 1922

PITTSBURGH DISPATCH

If the murderer of Taylor doesn't come in soon, the Los Angeles detectives will be threatened with old-fashioned nervous prostration.

* * * * *

February 22, 1922

Phil Armstrong

FLORIDA TIMES-UNION

Let some evangelist knock "l" out of Hollywood and make it Holywood--that ought to help some.

* * * * *

February 22, 1922

KANSAS CITY TIMES

Miss Lillian Gish, addressing a church audience in New York Sunday night said she had heard of "bad people" in the movies, "but," she added, "I have never met any of them." Which speaks volumes for Miss Gish's chaperon, whoever she happens to be.

* * * * *

February 23, 1922
PITTSBURGH SUN

Count that day lost whose low descending sun finds no new Taylor clue played out and done.

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February 23, 1922
WHITTIER NEWS

Movie hint: A shooting star falls.

* * * * *

February 23, 1922
Tom Sims
HELENA INDEPENDENT

"It would take 10 years to move Hollywood," protests one. Yes, yes, they must get their clothes from their neighbors' houses.

* * * * *

February 23, 1922
NEW YORK MAIL

If they don't look out somebody will tell the truth about that motion picture murder.

* * * * *

February 24, 1922
INDIANAPOLIS NEWS

It's a dull town that does not come forward with at least one suspect in the Taylor murder mystery.

* * * * *

February 24, 1922
MEMPHIS NEWS SCIMITAR

Another day gone by and the Japs haven't attacked California. But maybe they're afraid of those bad movie folks.

* * * * *

February 25, 1922

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

Hollywood will go a long way toward helping itself if it takes the bungle out of bungalow.

* * * * *

February 25, 1922

PHILADELPHIA RECORD

Mabel Normand is reported to be ill as a result of the Taylor case. Well, all the rest of us are rather sick of it, too.

* * * * *

February 25, 1922

PITTSBURGH POST

In addition to a suggestion that it might be called Alcohollywood, Chinese opium circles may know it as Hoppywood.

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February 25, 1922

CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER

The Taylor case is getting closer and closer to a solution, the same as the sun is getting closer and closer to the star Alpha in the constellation Hercules.

* * * * *

February 26, 1922

BALTIMORE SUN

Scandal may cure country girls of the movie fever, but think of the bucolic swains who will long to become directors.

* * * * *

February 27, 1922

KANSAS CITY STAR

Society note: Goshwatta Strutt of Hollywood, Cal., will arrive in Kansas

City tomorrow morning. It is not known as yet what hotel he will be requested to leave tomorrow night.

* * * * *

February 27, 1922

BOSTON GLOBE

Every time the detectives tell us that they are regarding the Hollywood murder mystery from a new angle, they remind us that they are going around in circles.

* * * * *

February 27, 1922

BALTIMORE SUN

Whatever the motive that inspired the killing of Taylor, it wasn't that of boosting the picture business.

* * * * *

February 28, 1922

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Somebody seems to be pulling the first syllable of his name over the eyes of Attorney Woolwine, of Los Angeles.

* * * * *

February 28, 1922

Houston Chronicle

O. O. MCINTYRE

The Hollywood affair brings to me one glint of the silver lining, however. I rejoice that I never became a movie fan. At my age I have lost too many illusions already.

* * * * *

February 28, 1922

Joe Webb

AUSTIN AMERICAN

We don't know whether or not it was a dopehead who killed Director Taylor, but we'd be willing to bet that dopeheads have been writing some of the bunk that has been published concerning the case.

* * * * *

February 28, 1922

COLUMBIA STATE

The police are still after Taylor's valet. It seems that the police theory is that not even a film magnate is a hero to his valet.

* * * * *

February 28, 1922

LOUISVILLE TIMES

The California orange crop is said to have suffered seriously from the recent cold spell. Also, in passing, it might be said that the Hollywood "peach" crop hasn't prospered lately.

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March 1, 1922

COLUMBIA STATE

"Mabel Normand almost well again." Another return to Normandcy. [62]

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March 2, 1922

LANSING CAPITAL NEWS

A sea serpent of great length is said to have been sighted off Long Beach, California. Probably the man who saw it was just returning from one of those Hollywood parties.

* * * * *

March 2, 1922

LIFE

The moving picture colony in California seems determined to turn itself inside out.

* * * * *

March 3, 1922

NEW YORK TRIBUNE

Until they began to arrest people for the murder of Taylor we had no real conception of the vast size of Los Angeles' population.

* * * * *

March 5, 1922

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL

What really ails the movie stars is that someone dammed the flattery flood.

* * * * *

March 5, 1922

FLORIDA TIMES-UNION

Los Angeles detectives now are said to be looking for "toe holds" in the movie murder mystery. What they seem to need is head holds.

* * * * *

March 6, 1922

Joe Webb

AUSTIN AMERICAN

It is against the law in Los Angeles for members of the police force to appear in motion pictures. Los Angeles evidently doesn't want her cops corrupted.

* * * * *

March 7, 1922

DETROIT FREE PRESS

Hollywood is much like other varieties. It can be handled much more easily after it is dried.

* * * * *

March 9, 1922

SAVANNAH NEWS

If the Los Angeles police lock up everybody that has been suggested as possibly guilty of the Taylor murder they'll have to have two or three new jails.

* * * * *

March 9, 1922

DES MOINES TRIBUNE

The new "bomb-shell" in the Taylor case Saturday was probably another "stink bomb."

* * * * *

March 9, 1922

DETROIT FREE PRESS

The public is beginning to suspect that a star of the first magnitude is one who loves the director.

* * * * *

March 13, 1922

Joe Webb

AUSTIN AMERICAN

A movie fan writes in to tell us that some of the movie stars may not be as bad as we think they are. He's probably right, too. Darned if we see how they could possibly be as bad as we think they are.

* * * * *

March 13, 1922

DES MOINES TRIBUNE

The charge that movie actors are drug fiends may explain some of the awful acting we have been compelled to witness.

* * * * *

March 16, 1922

DETROIT FREE PRESS

At the movies: "I always though her such a sweet girl, but I can see now she looks kinda depraved."

* * * * *

March 18, 1922

ARKANSAS GAZETTE

One detective says that Taylor was not killed by a woman; another says he was not killed by a man. If these two sleuths can get together, they might produce convincing evidence against the big ape that plays in the animal comedies.

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(continued next issue)

NEXT ISSUE:

The Connette Episode
Deposition by Leslie Henry
"The Humor of a Hollywood Murder":
Wild Hollywood Parties--Fact or Fiction?, William Desmond Taylor

NOTES:

- [1] See CHICAGO AMERICAN (February 21, 1922).
- [2] See BALTIMORE AMERICAN (February 7, 1922).
- [3] See LOS ANGELES RECORD (March 27, 1926).
- [4] See CHICAGO AMERICAN (February 10, 1922).
- [5] See LOS ANGELES RECORD (February 8, 1922).
- [6] See NEW YORK JOURNAL (February 6, 1922).
- [7] See VARIETY (February 17, 1922).
- [8] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (July 27, 1923).
- [9] See CHICAGO HERALD-EXAMINER (February 6, 1922).
- [10] See DENVER POST (March 3, 1922).
- [11] See LOS ANGELES RECORD (February 17, 1922).
- [12] See CHICAGO AMERICAN (February 14, 1922).
- [13] See SAN FRANCISCO CALL-POST (February 28, 1922).
- [14] See PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER (February 5, 1922).
- [15] See SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (October 16, 1925).
- [16] See LOS ANGELES RECORD (March 27, 1926).
- [17] See NEW YORK NEWS (February 25, 1922).
- [18] See SANTA ANA REGISTER (February 28, 1922).
- [19] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (March 4, 1922).
- [20] See LOS ANGELES EXPRESS (December 20, 1922).
- [21] See NEW YORK NEWS (February 22, 1922).
- [22] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 27, 1922).
- [23] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (March 3, 1922).
- [24] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 8, 1922).

- [25] See NEW YORK JOURNAL (February 9, 1922).
- [26] See OAKLAND TRIBUNE (February 15, 1922).
- [27] See DENVER POST (February 10, 1922).
- [28] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 5, 1922).
- [29] See LOS ANGELES RECORD (October 4, 1922).
- [30] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 14, 1922)
- [31] See CHICAGO AMERICAN (February 28, 1922).
- [32] See CHICAGO HERALD-EXAMINER (February 15, 1922).
- [33] See SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (February 13, 1922).
- [34] See SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (February 9, 1922).
- [35] See LOS ANGELES RECORD (February 21, 1922).
- [36] See SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (March 10, 1922).
- [37] See DALLAS TIMES-HERALD (February 9, 1922).
- [38] See HONOLULU STAR-BULLETIN (April 28, 1922).
- [39] See HONOLULU STAR-BULLETIN (April 25, 1922).
- [40] See MOVIE WEEKLY (March 24, 1923).
- [41] See SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (February 9, 1922).
- [42] See DETROIT TIMES (February 10, 1922).
- [43] See LOS ANGELES RECORD (February 13, 1922).
- [44] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (March 19, 1922).
- [45] See CHICAGO AMERICAN (February 22, 1922).
- [46] See BOSTON ADVERTISER (February 19, 1922).
- [47] See SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER (February 8, 1922).
- [48] See SAN FRANCISCO CALL-POST (March 3, 1922).
- [49] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 16, 1922).
- [50] See LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (March 9, 1922).
- [51] Comedian Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle was accused of causing the death of Virginia Rappe resulting from a party in San Francisco. Juries in the first two trials were unable to reach a verdict; in the third trial he was acquitted. For details see Andy Edmonds, FRAME UP! (Morrow, 1991) and David Yallop, THE DAY THE LAUGHTER STOPPED (St. Martin's, 1976).
- [52] Taylor lived on Alvarado Street.

[53] "katzenjammer"-- hangover.

[54] "teddy-bears"-- one-piece female undergarment.

[55] Will Hays, soon to become head of the movie industry, was the U.S.
Postmaster-General.

[56] Parody of: "tried and found wanting."

[57] Parody of: "make hay while the sun shines."

[58] Parody of racist stereotype: "n____ in the woodpile."

[59] "wet"-- containing plentiful alcohol.

[60] "See Paris and live!" was a travel slogan.

[61] The Volstead Act enacted prohibition which outlawed the sale of alcohol,
including Old Taylor brand whiskey.

[62] Parody of: "return to normalcy" (Harding's campaign slogan).

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.uno.edu/~drif/arbuckle/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>

For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 5 -- May 1993 Editor: Bruce Long *
* All reprinted material is in the public domain *

What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

Reader input is welcome, in the form of "Letters to the Editor," short articles, and contributed source material.

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The Connettee Episode

Deposition by Leslie Henry

"The Humor of a Hollywood Murder":

Wild Hollywood Parties--Fact or Fiction?, William Desmond Taylor

The Connettee Episode

Shortly after Taylor's murder, Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford took a business trip to New York. At every stop along the way they encountered reporters asking their reactions to the Taylor case. One newspaper reported:

'All this talk about Hollywood is a joke, anyway,' Doug said.

'Why, say, do you know there was a prominent minister and--oh,

me--oh, my--a prominent newspaper editor seen hiding around the Taylor house just before the murder? They're expected to be arrested at any minute. Strait stuff! This is the real inside story of Hollywood.'

Doug winked. [1]

Doug was, of course, joking. But within a few months a former newspaper editor would indeed find himself the center of suspicion in the Taylor case.

Honore Connette was telegraph editor of the LOS ANGELES TIMES until June of 1920 when he went to work for the LONG BEACH PRESS, where he remained until January 1922. On January 11, Connette's mother died. He began drinking heavily and became addicted to Veronal, a barbiturate. He left Los Angeles the day after Taylor was murdered, and sailed from San Francisco on February 7, bound for Honolulu aboard the Sonoma.

While the ship was anchored at quarantine outside Honolulu he approached the waterfront reporter for the HONOLULU ADVERTISER with many questions about the Taylor mystery. He asked if anything new had developed since the liner left San Francisco. He took the reporter to a corner of the deck to ask his questions and finally said, after looking around, in a quiet voice:

"I'll tell you one thing, that was not a woman case. You can be sure of that."

He was asked what he meant by this and said that he had been a newspaper man a long time, and knew lots of people in the "movie village," and had reached that conclusion.

The HONOLULU ADVERTISER reporter then consulted the local Chief of Detectives, informing him what Connette had said. The detective took down in his notebook details of Connette's name, his occupation and the questions which he had put to the reporter.

After the boat docked Connette applied for a job on the Honolulu newspapers, but was turned down. He went to Hilo, where he was hired by the HILO TRIBUNE.

On March 14, that newspaper published an article written by Connette suggesting that Taylor's killer was hiding in Hilo. Connette also wrote

'...that the slaying was of the vendetta type, and that the man who did the killing did so from a revenge motive. I believe that at some time in Taylor's life he may have wronged some one and that this person or possibly some near relative, a brother or father maybe, settled the account.'

Connette's article also expressed the firm belief that Sands was innocent.

On April 25, 1922, the following statement was issued by Harry Irwin, Attorney General of Hawaii:

The matter was called to my attention when I was in Hilo recently at a conference held between the governor, Mr. Green and Mr. Stevenson of the HILO TRIBUNE, and myself. They reported that from the time of Connette's arrival at Hilo he seemed to be very much interested in the Taylor murder case and it formed the chief subject of his conversation during the whole time he was here.

Mr. Greene and Mr. Stevenson soon became impressed with his interest in the case and began to observe more accurately his actions and his statements.

Connette, upon his arrival at Hilo, made a statement to Mr. Greene to the effect that in his opinion it would be easy for the person who murdered Taylor to come to Hawaii, lay low for awhile until the excitement died down, and then skip out to the orient.

He had obtained a passport to the orient before leaving Honolulu for Hilo. One night in the office of the HILO TRIBUNE he described in detail to Mr. Greene the way in which Taylor was murdered. He also described details which were subsequently shown to be substantiated at the time, but which were not published in newspaper accounts of the Taylor murder.

Connette seemed to be worried about the whereabouts of one Gareth Hughes.

Finally one day one of the police officers of Hilo found in the street a partially written letter which was addressed to Hughes.

It was shown that the letter was written on TRIBUNE bond paper and undoubtedly written by Connette. Connette later stated to Mr. Greene that 'everything was all right now' because of the fact that Hughes had gotten into Mexico and was then in a place called Ensenada, and that he could not be extradited because of the fact that the Obregon government had not been recognized by the United States.

This information was all transmitted by the attorney general's department by letter and wire to Mr. Woolwine, the Los Angeles district attorney, who requested the attorney general's office obtain a statement in detail from Connette. This request was forwarded by the attorney general's department to Hilo by wire and the reply came the same day to the effect that Connette was leaving that day for Honolulu by the steamer Maui.

The attorney general, with the aid of Detective Captain McDuffie and members of the detective force, then attempted to locate Connette in Honolulu. On his arrival in Honolulu from Hilo he left his trunk on the wharf and went away with a handbag.

Every effort was made to locate him, but without success. It was found that he had purchased a ticket for San Francisco on the steamer Maui. He evidently went aboard the Maui a few moments before that vessel sailed for the coast.

His acquaintances here, as far as the office of the attorney general is able to ascertain, saw nothing of him during that time. The fact that he was on his way to San Francisco was wired to District Attorney Woolwine in Los Angeles. Subsequent to this, the attorney general's office received a wire message from Attorney Woolwine stating that Hughes had appeared in his office, made a full explanation of his whereabouts, and had been freed from any suspicion as to being connected with the Taylor murder. [2]

The letter supposedly written by Connette was typewritten and not signed. It read:

My Dear Gareth,

This may possibly be the last letter you will have from me, and so I will be quite frank and clear things up so you will understand when the crash comes. I expected to be well out of this mess before this and my previous letters have led you to believe that everything was clear sailing.

I did not want to worry you. What I did back there I have never regretted. Always remember that I acted to an impression stronger than faith or this thing they call religion. As I told you in the house at San Jose, I believe in the Mosaic law: 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' I cleared on your score. I did what any brother would have done if he had any red British blood in him.

I thought we could get away with it all. On the ship was a man who kept trying to make friends with me. You know I was ill with the worry of it all, but I had reasons enough not to meet this man's advances, for something warned me. You know the old superstition of our country, the thing that comes like a shadow and tells of approaching death. [3]

When Connette arrived in San Francisco on the Maui he was taken into custody by L.A.P.D. Detective Sergeant Jesse Winn. Among Connette's effects was found a .38 calibre revolver with one shot fired. Winn took a long statement from Connette and escorted him back to Los Angeles where he was held in jail as a "material witness."

Meanwhile, back on Hilo, the HILO POST-HERALD reported:

According to his associates while in Hilo, Connette, during periods of being under the influence of either liquor or drugs made statements that would give his hearers the impression that he was connected in the famous Los Angeles mystery.

On one occasion he gave a vivid pantomime of the murder to one of the members of the house where he was stopping. Going through the action of Taylor bending over a table signing his

income tax return and showing how the murderer stepped out of the closet, steadying his revolver on a table and firing the fatal shot that sent Taylor to his death. Again taking up the role of the murdered man, he showed how the stricken man staggered and fell, indicating the place where he dropped the fountain pen he was using and other small details.

At another time after receiving a letter from the mainland he stated to another member of the household, 'Well, I don't care what happens now, the boy has reached a country where the United States has no treaty, they will never catch him now.'

On another occasion he said to the same party, 'Well, I suppose I may as well go back and face it, like a man. I can never escape anyway and it won't make any difference as I won't live long anyway.'

Connette kept a loaded, cocked thirty-eight revolver in his rooms at all times and sometimes carried it on his person. When asked why he had the revolver cocked, he replied, 'Oh some day I may want to commit suicide and I don't want to change my mind while I am cocking the gun.' [4]

After this story appeared in print the reporter who wrote it was taken into custody by the Hilo Sheriff Department and questioned for several hours regarding his sources of information. Then several other people were summoned to verify his statements.

Back in Los Angeles, Connette stated,

"I never saw the letter until it was shown to me by Sergeant Winn. The letter was apparently built upon things I said in a moment of levity in the presence of a newspaper rival in Hilo. I know absolutely nothing about the Taylor murder other than the facts that are common knowledge. A newcomer in Hilo is a target for either fair or unfair treatment and I stirred up considerable animosity owing to newspaper rivalry there. I suppose I drank a bit and said things while under the influence of liquor upon which the preposterous situation in which I now find myself, could have been built.

Another motive on the part of the newspaper rival in making the charges, is the fact that he desired to return to California. He thought if I were held for trial on the charge of killing Taylor, he would secure free transportation as a witness."

Connette did admit once working in one of Taylor's films as an extra, and having a casual conversation with Taylor about a book.

When Connette's explanation was relayed to his acquaintances, back in Hilo, he was not believed. They stated Connette had no known enemies in the newspaper profession and several people living in the boarding house where he made his home also heard him make incriminating statements on the Taylor case. He had described the murder in detail on several occasions and stated that he witnessed it from a point in Taylor's study. Hilo Sheriff Sam Pua sent a cable to Woolwine stating:

"Important evidence is in my possession concerning H. C. Connette. The evidence includes a signed statement in which Connette declared he killed a man a short time ago in defense of his honor. He also gave a description of Taylor's room at the time of the killing."

In Los Angeles, Connette denied he ever killed anyone. He was taken to the Taylor residence and paraded before Faith MacLean; she said he did not resemble the man she saw leaving Taylor's home the night he was killed. Connette was then taken to a Turkish bathhouse on Fourth Street, reportedly a hang-out for drug addicts. He stated he had been there on the night of the murder, registered under the name of Donald MacDonald. The name was found in the registry and several attendants stated they remembered him being there on that night. Actor Gareth Hughes was summoned to police headquarters, questioned again and released. Connette was also released. The District Attorney's office stated that no charges had been placed against Connette or Hughes and that none would be. On April 29, THE HILO TRIBUNE headline blared:

CONNETTE CASE TO BE HUSHED UP BY WOOLWINE

On that note, the Connette episode faded from public view.

Deposition by Leslie Henry

Extracts from deposition by Leslie B. Henry, given July 11, 1933:

A: (By Leslie B. Henry) Some time within a month or two of Mrs. Shelby leaving, I think it was along in March or April, 1926, Mrs. Shelby called me and asked me to come to the house; that a situation had developed that was of a very serious nature, and to please not fail to come.

Q: (By Mr. Schwartz) Did you go?

A: I did.

Q: What was your conversation, if you had one?

A: To the best of my recollection, Mrs. Shelby told me that District Attorney Keyes was on his way to New York in connection with the Taylor murder case, and that she was convinced that Mary -- She told me that Mary would probably lie about her, and wanted to know what she should do under the circumstances. I asked Mrs. Shelby, had she talked to Mr. Mott about it, and she told me that she had not talked to Mott, and told me that, "A friend of mine on the Examiner" had given her the information.

Q: A friend of yours?

A: I mean a friend of hers. I told Mrs. Shelby I saw nothing that could be done about it until Mr. Keyes' return. She was in a hysterical state -- I cannot describe it. She told me, "This will kill me." I told Mrs. Shelby, "You haven't anything to fear in this. You need feel no sense of guilt." She said, "I don't know what Mary will tell him." And whether it was just that conversation or a series -- I don't know. This thing occupied weeks in there.

Q: You mean you had a number of conversations on the subject?

A: Yes. I had conversation after conversation with Mrs. Shelby about this particular incident, and it became absolutely critical -- well, Mrs. Shelby told me, "I can't wait for this thing. I have got to get out, and get out now." I told Mrs. Shelby that if there was any information got out that Keyes had gone to New York for the purpose of making an investigation of this matter, that for her to make a move at that particular time would probably to be caught, and put in an absolutely impossible position, so far as the Taylor case and other matters were concerned. The matter got into the newspapers.

Q: Did you see articles appearing in the newspapers at that time?

A: I did.

Q: Did you discuss any of those articles with Mrs. Shelby?

A: On the appearance of any article that had any new development in that case Mrs. Shelby would call me and have me come to the house to talk with her regarding the new phases of it.

Q: Will you go ahead and give us your best recollection of the conversations you had in the series of talks, when you say you went out there frequently, when the matter was under discussion?

A: The question of the passport, and the citizenship and everything came very much to the front in connection with this. I am trying to segregate them. I can only tell this, that Mrs. Shelby called me to her house many times during the period I believe of I think it was March, April and May -- it was right near the time of sailing, in connection with, as I said, new developments in the case. Mrs. Shelby would call me and tell me, "The papers

called up today and asked me" such and such a question, and among other things they asked her whether she was a crack shot with a revolver, and whether she had a revolver in the house, and Mrs. Shelby said, "The only revolver that ever was in the house as far as I know was one that Mary one time tried to get to shoot me."

Q: Shoot whom?

A: Mrs. Shelby. She on some of these occasions asked me -- on all occasions, asked me how she was going to stop this situation from the papers, particularly just before Mr. Keyes got back, and I told her on each occasion, "Mrs. Shelby, you are going to have to wait until the District Attorney is here." She told me she had talked with Mr. Mott, and Mr. Mott had told her the same thing.

I talked with Mr. Mott, and Mr. Mott said the same thing. "There is not a thing that can be done on this until Mr. Keyes is here, and we can talk to him."

I said to Mrs. Shelby on one occasion, "You are perfectly convinced that you can tell a connected and witnessed story of what you were doing on that night?" She told me -- I can't repeat it, but it was exactly the same story she told me right after the Taylor murder, of what she had done that night. I said, "I can't see why you should continue to worry about it." She was just distraught upon each of those occasions.

I said, "Put faith in your own innocence in the situation." She said, "I don't know what that girl will tell Keyes." I told her that after all there was nothing she could tell Keyes that must not be subjected to investigation and study and search. She said, "All Mary is doing is trying to ruin me, in addition to the financial situation." Mrs. Shelby said, "And after all she may be lying for herself." I said, "You don't mean, Mrs. Shelby, that Mary had anything to do with that?" And she said, "She may have been damned fool enough to have done it."

Incidentally there was a similar remark made after the actual death of

Taylor. In trying to relieve her of fear I told her, "You have just got to stand on your own consciousness of your innocence, and the nature of the story that you have told me, and if it will stand up the district attorney will do nothing to you."

When Mr. Keyes returned --

Q: Did you have any further conversation with Mrs. Shelby on this same subject after Mr. Keyes returned?

A: Yes, I did.

Q: At the same place?

A: Yes.

Q: Will you give us the conversation? First did Mrs. Shelby, if you know, remain in the city during this period of time, or did she go out of the city at any time?

A: During this period of February until June, 1926, I was going to tell you that I am trying to place the time --

Q: (by Mr. Lewinson) That is not a complete answer. Trying to place the time, of what?

A: Oh, I had not answered the question. No, she did not remain in the city.

Q: (Mr. Schwartz) Do you know where she went?

A: Mrs. Shelby told me when Keyes was expected here, and that she was not going to stay here and be indicted for the murder of Taylor. That she was going to get out then. And I told Mrs. Shelby, "If you leave under these

circumstances it will be quite possible in my estimation for you to be indicted. If ever there was a time when you should be on the ground, this is it, at this time."

She told me that to follow that kind of advice would be just to "Sit here and not only be indicted but probably find myself confronted with framed testimony." She said, "I can show legitimate reasons for leaving the city. They can't indict me on the score of a departure, because if either you or Mr. Mott get any inquiry you can tell them I am away on business relating to my mother's affairs, my mother's estate.

Mrs. Shelby told me she was having absolutely no contact with the newspapers, and hid herself away from any association with anybody.

Q: You mean this was in a conversation?

A: Yes, and Mrs. Shelby told me, "I am going to get out of here, and whatever has to come through you or through Mr. Mott it can be stated that I am out of the city in connection with my mother's affairs." To the best of my knowledge Mrs. Shelby -- She told me that she was going down to Louisiana, and that in the small towns there it would not be possible for anybody to locate her.

Q: Do you know how long she remained away?

A: I don't remember whether it was several or three weeks. I cannot tell you.

Q: Did you see her when she came back?

A: I did.

Q: Did you have any conversations with her?

A: Yes.

Q: On this same subject matter in connection with the death of Taylor?

A: Yes.

Q: Go ahead and give us your best recollection of any conversations she had in the period before she left for Europe.

A: After I returned there was a constant rehash of this same situation, of apprehension, not knowing what was going to happen, and she told me that Mr. Mott assured her that if the matter had not been taken up with the grand jury it was not going to result, in his estimation, in any action at that time. That Keyes was apparently not prepared to go ahead with it.

Mrs. Shelby told me that Mr. Mott told her that Keyes had, I believe, told him that he had insufficient evidence, despite what he had learned in New York, to bring an indictment without further investigation.

Mrs. Shelby told me, "I am going to demand that the district attorney's office make a statement exonerating me in this and call this thing off now, or it will surely be reopened again, and it may stop me from going abroad, or bring me back when it would be to my greatest embarrassment." I asked her how she was going to get that kind of a statement. She said, "I have demanded of Mott that he talk with Keyes and get that kind of a statement from him." She said, "Don't you think I should be exonerated?" And I said, "Unquestionably. If there is any possible way of getting you clear on this thing I would surely leave no stone unturned in order to get it." She asked me if I knew Keyes, and I told her that I did not. But I told her that I knew a deputy in the district attorney's office, Fitts, and she said, "Can't you talk to him and see whether he can -- You tell Fitts what kind of a man I am" -- beg pardon, "what kind of a woman I am, and let him carry that word to his superior." I told her I would do that if Mott was unsuccessful with Keyes.

Mrs. Shelby told me that she felt very certain that Mr. Mott could get that kind of a statement from Mr. Keyes. I asked her whether Mr. Mott had given her that kind of an assurance, and she said she was confident that by reason of Mr. Mott's position in the community that he could obtain such a statement.

I told Mrs. Shelby that I could not believe that Mr. Mott had made any such assurance to her, because I could not conceive of the district attorney coming out with a public statement, or even a secret signed letter to her exonerating her of a crime, especially in a situation where they evidently were all at sea, where new developments might at some future time make the district attorney appear in an absolutely impossible position.

I told her that seeing Mr. Fitts was just about as purposeless, and that I would be very much surprised if Keyes signed any such statement.

I cannot differentiate these conversations. Mrs. Shelby told me on more than one occasion after that, in conversations at her home, that she had not been able to get anything out of Mott. That Mott had not gotten this statement which he had promised to try to get for her. And finally, I believe it was within a month of the time she sailed, she told me that Mott had told her that Keyes would not sign such a statement, and she told me, "Without that exoneration I cannot stay in this country safely. You must speed up everything for me to get away from here before something happens."

That was about the substance of those conversations at that time.

Q: Did you have conversations with her in New York on that same subject?

A: That was in New York, when that came up. I am trying to place --

Q: (by Mr. Lewinson) Mr. Schwartz, I don't understand whether that question has been answered yes or no, whether he had conversations in New York?

Q: (by Mr. Schwartz) He said yes. Did you answer, Yes?

A: Yes.

Q: You say you are trying to place when and where it occurred?

A: Yes, whether in the express office, or coming away from the express office -- I don't remember.

Q: Was there anyone present besides the two of you?

A: I don't remember whether Barbara was with me or not. I cannot really place Barbara in that picture. Mrs. Shelby asked me, did I think that she could be caught before she left on the boat, by a warrant from the district attorney's office in connection with the Taylor murder case. She said, "I seem to have gotten by the Government as far as my passport is concerned, but can the district attorney at Los Angeles pick me up here in New York on a warrant for my arrest?"

Q: On a "warrant for my arrest?"

A: Yes. I told her that I did not think a warrant could be issued against her unless she had been indicted, or a complaint had been filed, and it had been very evident before she left Los Angeles, from information Mr. Mott had given her, and from what Mr. Mott had told me, and that I told her, that they were not going to take any chances on indicting Mrs. Shelby without better evidence than they had, or they would have done it when they came back from New York. She said, "They might do it, if it is found out in Los Angeles that I am out of the city with this property, because no action can be taken by Mr. O'Melveny against me here. Mr. O'Melveny might use the district attorney's office to stop me in some way." I told her I thought that was ridiculous, and not to worry herself in the few hours before she was to sail, over a matter of that kind.

One of the last things she asked me in New York was, "Can they extradite

me in Europe without indicting me?" I told her I was certain they could not. She said, "Well, I can't get caught off-guard," and I told her if there was any indictment developed in the case that I was certain that Mr. Mott would have early acquaintance with it, and that while he would on discovery that she was in Europe be very, very angry over having been left in a somewhat embarrassing position of he as her attorney not having been informed of her departure; that I thought Mr. Mott would be the first one to be informed as to anyone that could reach her, telling her of any danger of that nature, and that it would probably be in the newspapers, and certainly there would be speedy enough information to inform her, so that before the service of a warrant, or any extradition proceedings she would know what her situation was. She told me, "Well, they will have to find me if you or Margaret get word to me that an indictment has come." I told her to forget the indictment. That was about the substance of the talk.

"The Humor of a Hollywood Murder", Part 2

Wild Hollywood Parties: Fact or Fiction?

March 12, 1922

CHATTANOOGA TIMES

(Chattanooga)--Declaring that he had recently been in Hollywood and other points in Southern California, and was thus informed of conditions there, evangelist John Brown told his congregation of women that what little they may have read of the degradation and vice existing in the motion picture colonies had but touched at the edges of things as they are. One hundred of the leading actresses have organized as the "Nude 100," he said, and the fetes of the organization could not have been surpassed in wicked Sodom and Gomorrah of old.

* * * * *

February 13, 1922

Lindsay Denison
NEW YORK EVENING WORLD

(Los Angeles)--There was a "party" which was raided by the police though nothing came of the raid. After a commonplace entertainment remarkable only for stupid vulgarity, "refreshments were served." But the servants had not food and drink on their trays--they had hypodermic needles, papers of "snow" and opium layouts. There was a "pill cooking contest" between noted headliners. It was at this point that the police broke in. The host broke out at the same moment and a few minutes later appeared at his front door in his palatial car, demanding to know "what had been going on his absence."

* * * * *

February 9, 1922
Edward Doherty
NEW YORK NEWS

(Los Angeles)--William Desmond Taylor would have been a Patrician had he lived in Rome when it was at its greatest and wickedest. Taylor's ghost might boast to the other ghosts of having been at better parties than any that they had seen. He might tell them, for instance, that little tale told by an humble Jap. [5]

The Jap served as valet to half a dozen stars; was butler at a number of houses. Let him, for the story's sake, relate his tale in English.

It was the Jap's first time in the mansion--the home of one of the most beautiful and famous actresses in the world.

"They asked me serve the dinner for them last night. I was delighted when they asked me. I said to myself, 'I will really see this angel-like creature, this woman that has filled my life with beauty.' I was exalted. I tread reverently in that house.

"The guests came, two by two, man and wife, in great automobiles. They came in laughing, full of happiness. I had seen them all. The greatest stars in the world!

"A dozen of them there were. And how I admired them!

"One of them sang while the dinner was getting ready; one of them played

the piano. Then one of them danced. I peeked through the door, which I held open just a little--so. The dinner was ready. The guests sat down at the table. Such silverware! Such wonderful linen! Such great heaps of food! Lamps were burning everywhere, and there were many flowers.

"I served the cocktails. I brought on the courses. I brought on wine and highballs, and green drinks, and yellow, and orange, and purple drinks.

"I was bringing in the coffee service on a cart when the big man threw a plate of food at me. He hit me with it. He hit me in the face. The gravies trickled down my vest and on to the rug--the rug worth thousands of dollars.

"They thought it fun. They shouted. Men commenced to throw things at the women. The women threw things at the men.

"Soon the food was flying all over the room. Costly china plates were smashed against the walls. Statues were thrown down and broken, pictures were ruined. Flowers were strewn everywhere, mashed under heels.

"They got up, drunk, most of them. They threw whisky and wine at each other. One man poured a bottle of champagne down the front of a sweet little girl's neck and the language she used! Never have I heard such words!

"The victrola was turned on; the big man yanked the tablecloth from the table and put it on him and gave a war whoop like the Indians, and danced around, making gestures that were nasty.

"Everybody followed him. They yelled. They whooped. They threw chairs at mirrors. One man, very graceful he was, turned cartwheels, and his feet struck a woman and knocked her down. She put her arms around him and kissed him and bathed his hair with half a tumbler full of whisky.

"Then the big man jumped on the table and pulled open his shirt and exposed his stomach. He held his stomach with his big left hand, and with the other he plunged a hypodermic needle into it. [6] It sickened me, but everybody laughed.

" 'This is the life!' he shouted, and jumped down and took a lady in his arms and went into another room. She was not the lady he came in with. Everybody left the room too, with everybody else's wife, except the lady that owned the house; and she laughed, and told me to get busy and clean up the

place."

Perhaps the ghost of the murdered Taylor may come back to the scene of these old revels and visit with the blades that still hold orgies in the palaces of Hollywood.

* * * * *

February 7, 1922

Adela Rogers St. Johns

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

I spend eleven months of the year in Hollywood. And I give you my personal word of honor that I've never seen anybody sticking hypodermic needles in their tummies yet.

* * * * *

February 13, 1922

Lindsay Denison

NEW YORK EVENING WORLD

It was under such influences as the unlimited supply of intoxicants and narcotics that a "distinguished gathering" (speaking filmily) at the mansion in a village near Hollywood became a "menagerie party." The guests got down on all fours and proceeded to conduct themselves each as he conceived the animal he was imitating would act in his native jungle or sty. As the festivities became "jazzed up" the terrific noises and the squeals and screams of some of the women, who didn't like the playful tricks of the human wild beasts, caused quieter members of the community to violate their usual reticence and call the police. The Chief of Police undertook the errand himself. The noise died down for a time; about daylight it became so outrageous again that a committee of scandalized outsiders gathered at the front door. They were just in time to meet the Chief of Police coming out, hatless, with his hair tousled, blood running from a torn ear and with an "extra" girl hanging unconscious in his arms. He declared he was "the original Borneo organ-outang returning to the jungle with the fairest of the villagers." The sight of the horrified neighbors sobered him into releasing the fair villager, but he isn't Chief of Police in that suburb any more.

* * * * *

March 19, 1922

Frank O'Malley

NEW ORLEANS ITEM

For many weeks past, the news from California as published in the public prints would lead us to believe that the chief indoor sport of the movie folks was setting fire to all the child movie actors at the end of the day--just to see the children burn with a clear blue flame.

We have been led to believe that all those lads and girls cavorting before the movie camera in Hollywood and vicinity are daily guilty of more rascality than all the deviltries ever charged against John Doe and his degenerate relative, Richard Roe, put together.

* * * * *

March 3, 1922

TACOMA LEDGER

If all those stories told of the Los Angeles movie colony are true, why do the sensational film producers go to all the trouble of scenarios and posed pictures? Why not just turn their cameras on Hollywood from day to day?

* * * * *

February 9, 1922

Edward Doherty

NEW YORK NEWS

(Los Angeles)--The "love cult" angle was introduced into the case late in the day through the troubled conscience of a resident of Chinatown. This man through an intermediary communicated with the District Attorney's office and asked that he be given immunity in exchange for information in his possession.

He had supplied the opium for the members of this cult, all men, of which, he says, Taylor was a member. He declares the men would lie in silk kimonos, smoke the essence of the poppy flower and so commence their ritual, old as Sodom.

The Chinese asserted that the members of the cult were held together by

a bond, unthinkable, unnameable, unbelievable, and that each had sworn an oath of undying affection for the others.

He believes the jealousy of one of these degenerate cultists may have caused him to slay the movie man.

* * * * *

February 22, 1922

Herb Westen

SAN FRANCISCO CALL-POST

(Los Angeles)--There seems to be a concerted move to muffle the reports of Hollywood vice. The Chamber of Commerce has taken it up and a petition, it is understood, is now being circulated to prevail upon a Chicago newspaperman to "go away from here."

Local interests charge that he has painted the colony too black--that his imagination has run away with his judgement.

* * * * *

February 25, 1922

Rob Wagner

OAKLAND TRIBUNE

Eastern newspapers now are painting pictures of a "movie colony" that surpass anything our wildest directors ever put on the screen to show decadence and crime.

This modern Gomorrah is known the world over as Hollywood, and, according to population imagination, its streets are lined with dance-halls, cabarets, magnificent gambling joints and opium dens, the denizens of the film colony working but one or two temperamental hours a day, devoting the other twenty-three to delicious sin. Movie queens, in inlaid limousines, roll through the golden avenues to meet wicked directors intent upon their happy ruin, bathing parties nightly plunge into tanks of eau-de-cologne, while beautiful "snow birds" attend cocaine parties at which the Japanese servants administer drugs from silver needles; while every morning the police, seizing the blonde curls of your beautiful film favorite, drag her from some subterranean hop-joint. [7]

One eastern paper goes so far as to say that "the needle-hounds of Hollywood order their drugs over the telephone like groceries." [8]

No, puzzled reader, these tales of "love cults" and "dope rings" are just good old newspaper hokum. The only real evidence I can offer in the use of narcotics is the hectic nonsense emanating from the drugged sconces of the newspaper fellows, who have been looking at Hollywood through dope rings of their own blowing.

* * * * *

February 25, 1922

Baxter

MOVING PICTURE WORLD

In Hollywood the poppies blow,
Tall columns rise of poppy smoke.
The correspondents snuff the "snow,"
Then write in dreams that come from "coke."
The hop pipes glow, the stories grow--
Old heroin provides the facts--
Imaginations slumming go,
And twist the simple, kindly acts.
The hemp, the hashish and the dope
Arrange that blameless folk bear blame.
Fake interviews with shadow ghosts
Are easy when you use no name.
The orgies that they write about
Are brain creations of their own.
The lethal fumes arising high
Come in rings that they have blown.
It matters not how wild the lie.
If readable "It's fit to print."
The buzzards to their carrion fly
And gorge their public without stint.
In Hollywood the poppies blow,

They will continue so to do
Until the voice of Truth prevails
And tells the liars they are through.

* * * * *

March 6/7, 1922

Edward Doherty

CHICAGO TRIBUNE/DENVER POST

Writer Answers Screen Defense of Soiled Nest

"How can there be men and women writers anywhere on earth base enough to invent any or all of the lurid stories that have been printed so generally about Hollywood and the film people?"

The question was asked in an article by Frank Woods, president of the Screen Writers' Guild of the Authors' League of America, and Thompson Buchanan, chairman of the Writers Club, which was printed in the CHICAGO TRIBUNE of March 1 and in other papers throughout the country.

The article, a defense of Hollywood and the film people, is in reality an attack upon Wallace Smith of the CHICAGO EVENING AMERICAN and myself--and Mr. Woods and Mr. Buchanan mentioned our names, branding us as liars, fakers, slanderers, dealers in scandal.

Mr. Smith and I have been warned repeatedly that gangs of men employed in the studios have sworn to "get us." [9] We have been called "space writers," representatives of the "scurrilous eastern press," and it has been intimated that we are users of drugs ourselves--we who complain that a few movie actors ease their worries with a sniff or a shot in the arm. But the movie people who have threatened violence have taken the more prudent method. They have not come near us. They have left the matter to their writing men--and these have attacked us in the newspapers.

I should not have replied to these articles had the TRIBUNE, for which I write, not printed the Woods-Buchanan article. The TRIBUNE printed it because the TRIBUNE believes in fair play. Had there not been a reference to

Mr. Smith and myself I should not have challenged a single statement of these two Hollywood writers.

In the first place let me explain that neither Wallace Smith nor Edward Doherty is a space writer. [10] Both of us, writing space, could have made thousands of dollars; neither of us made a cent. We wrote what we pleased, spending extra hours to send it, merely because we were assigned to the story and felt it our duty to tell the world about Hollywood.

Not a line of what we wrote was faked. Not a story was invented; not one article that either of us wrote contained a single thing that was untrue. [11] Both of us know that if we did print anything untrue there would be libel suits. There have been many articles in which we were referred to as liars and slanderers--but no libel suit has been started; and we do not believe one will be started.

I live in Hollywood. I have lived there since last October. I have a year's lease on a house. I intend to go on living in Hollywood. I know Hollywood, and I know my neighbors.

Wallace Smith has lived in the Ambassador Hotel since last November, but he knows Hollywood, too. He has frequently visited it in the company of actors and actresses. He has been to some of the Hollywood parties which--according to Messrs. Woods and Buchanan--never occurred.

It may be an interesting sidelight to record the fact that I, a conscienceless liar, a slanderous scandal monger, a reporter who has told so many untruths about Hollywood, should be offered the opportunity of becoming the chief publicity man for "Fatty" Roscoe Arbuckle--and that I should reject the offer as soon as it was made.

I covered the Arbuckle story on three occasions in San Francisco. I had excellent opportunities for "faking," as the Woods-Buchanan combination calls it. But it appears I sadly neglected it--and the offer to become Arbuckle's publicity man came from one of Arbuckle's attorneys, a man who has read everything I have written, including my articles on Hollywood.

"Hollywood is angry," said this lawyer. "The truth stings."

I feel rather proud of this.

The Woods-Buchanan article intimates that I sided with the district attorney against Arbuckle. I sided with nobody. I never do. I tell the facts as accurately as I can get them. I feel with the Screen Writers in this--that Arbuckle is innocent of the death of Virginia Rappe.

"Arbuckle's mode of living," they said, "which was too often the same as that of thousands of young men of other stations in life, who, like him, have too much money, was nevertheless indefensible, and, somehow, someway, the impression was conveyed that he was a fair example of the film folks' depravity."

That's what the Screen Writers said. I wouldn't have said that. Strange to say, I believe Arbuckle one of the cleanest of all moving picture actors. I didn't think so--but the conviction was drilled into me through watching him in his three ordeals and to listening to the evidence against him.

"This quiet and beautiful section of Los Angeles has been treated to a drenching of slander unequalled in American journalism," the defenders say, "while film people themselves have been pictured largely as drug addicts, drunkards, profligates, and degenerates. If a half or a quarter or even a tenth of this muckraking is founded on fact then the people engaged in making motion pictures, particularly the stars, are of the wrong class and ought to be eliminated."

True, and the "muckraking" is founded on a talk with a member of the state board of pharmacy, who has control of the drug addicts of Los Angeles and who has registered not a few moving picture stars and lesser lights with deputy sheriffs; with decent men and women picture players; with the local reporters, who wish they could print what they know; with the records in the police blotters.

Neither Smith nor I was born yesterday. We have been in many cities in the United States and Mexico. Both of us have become more or less accustomed to looking on the seamy side of life--and both of us were amazed at the conditions that exist in the land of the movies. We were incredulous at first. We investigated. We found out the truth. And at the earliest

opportunity, without consulting each other, we began to tell it.

I regret to say that we were not the first to tell of what is going on in Hollywood--I do not say was going on, but is going on.

Theodore Dreiser told some plain, blunt, ugly facts about directors and extra girls and other incidents in SHADOWLAND, a moving picture magazine.

[12] I have not heard that either Mr. Woods or Mr. Buchanan called Mr. Dreiser a liar or a faker or a muckraker or even a space writer.

Let's sum up the rest of the article briefly:

"Work in pictures is exacting and mentally and physically exhausting--so much so that a great majority of the active workers have no time, strength, nor inclination for the revelries and orgies which have been pictured as the rule rather than the exception."

But there is a minority that does find the time. We did not say the majority was rotten. We do say the minority is.

"The camera is relentless, and no actor or actress, especially the younger ones whose faces are literally their fortunes, can remain long in the spotlight and at the same time give way to any sort of self-indulgence."

Correct. There are a lot of favorites, still young, still beautiful, who no longer dare the camera's scrutiny. There are others who will be "removed" very soon. It is understood that Adolph Zukor came to the coast recently to get rid of one of the most prominent male stars in the world--who has been using a hypodermic needle. [13]

"Taylor, himself, who had been a man of exemplary habits, fine deportment, and high ideals, turned out to have had an adventurous past. He had taken a stage name, like many others of theatrical profession, and this was made much of."

He had a woman's nightgown in his home. He was attended by persons of no character. He was an intimate of several women, had deserted his wife and child. He took a couple of stage names. There are other accusations against him. One could go on indefinitely.

The article complains that reporters said certain movie people questioned by the officials were "grilled." Smith and Doherty said they were

not grilled, but should have been--and we repeat it.

After telling how Smith and Doherty "seized on the Taylor mystery as an excuse for digging up and rehashing all the dead scandals of the picture people that had accumulated in the last ten years" the article admits "there were only a bare half dozen of them," adding, "but they were embellished, added to, and enlarged until they read like juicy stuff."

Here's confirmation right out of the screen people themselves. We not only dug up a lot of dead scandals which were news because they had not been printed before--but we also told a lot of new ones. A writer in New York [14] tells how the film folk there recognized the persons talked about, even though in the first place the stories were untrue, and the characters, thinly disguised. This writer, after denying everything we wrote, added very naively, that we must have paid "some one on the inside" very well for our information.

Then there is reference to an "alleged interview with a Jap butler--pure fiction."

It was I who told the Jap butler's story. I don't know whether the story was true, however. I could not verify it. So I told it, as it came to me and quoted the Jap butler for what he was worth--nothing more.

There are more ridiculous articles being printed by the Screen Writers than two reporters can reply to. They are all of the same type, denying the stories written by us, calling us fakers, picturing us as "trampling the daisies under foot" and proving nothing.

However, as Smith has told, the biggest hotel in Los Angeles has given its waiters order to "sap over the head" any actor who "sniffs a nail full of snow, or mixes a drink, or makes a rough crack in the dining room."

William Desmond Taylor

February 12, 1922

Jane Dixon

Fate is Seen in Tragic End of Filmdom's "Love Pirate"

It's a man's game--that of love pirate.

The man plays, and plays--and PAYS.

A potent, pulsing personality; a magnetism dangerous as it is compelling; a heart attuned to the voices of many women; a quick wit; a ready tongue; an adventuring that brooks no interference, moral nor material; a mad, reckless whirl through the shining hour of sun; and at the end--the leaden period of death.

William Desmond Taylor, dabbler in dreams. Ink is scarce dry on the cancelled mortgage the powers of evil held against his life.

So, out of the rainbow past, the long, long past reaches the arm of expiation, pointing a merciless finger toward the hour of earthly reckoning.

There is no escaping that finger.

Ignore it if you dare.

Defy it.

Beat upon it with a will to destroy it.

Still it points, and will point, until the ardent adventurer comes into his travail, until expiation has been done.

Filmdom welcomed William Desmond Taylor, gave him a seat among the mighty, hearkened to his word, moved at his command. Its men looked and admired. Its women looked--and loved. What richer sea could a love pirate sail?

A list of the girls, the women, taken aboard the love pirate's ship of dreams for a brief cruise on the sea of pleasure would read like a slightly deleted directory of the screen's feminine stars. There is another directory, too, made up of the names of lesser planets, simple little extra girls who left the safe harbor of their homes to seek fortune in the world of make-believe. To them the great man behind the megaphone was a god whose favor was to be sought at any cost.

Now, if we may believe rumor, the sated appetite of the love pirate called for stronger stimulants than a conquest of hearts. One report has him

a member of a cult with an unmanly ritual. Another speaks boldly of drugs--opium, cocaine, Lethian fogs of forgetfulness, ending in wild orgies, during which women, in jealous frenzies, tore the clothes from each other's bodies and, stripped to the waist, fought like tigers for the favor of the pirate ship captain.

Once, at least, since he has been privileged to gather blossoms willy-nilly in the glamorous garden of love, the pirate has eaten of his own dead sea fruit. His chauffeur tells how, after a New Year's eve party in the fashionable Ambassador Hotel, Los Angeles, he was so unhappy over an altercation with his companion [15] of the evening that he broke down and wept. The bitterness of unrequited love seems to have been his portion in this particular case. He was reaping the whirlwind of his own sowing.

Who sped on its horrid way the leaden pellet which brought the eventful story of the love pirate's life to a tragic close?

Was it one of the fair ships he had scuttled?

Was it another pirate vessel, jealous of a rival's plunder?

Was it a legitimate craft, the captain of which could not endure the depredations of the modern Captain Kidd?

Was it a derelict, its crew gone mad from dipping into a contraband cargo of drugs?

Was it a phantom ship sailing out of the past to drive the pirate from the seas?

Of only one fact we are sure--that William Deane-Tanner, alias William Desmond Taylor, could no longer escape the moving finger of Fate. He had made a bargain. The hour was at hand when he must pay--in silent expiation. Destiny, as is just, has taken her toll.

* * * * *

February 3, 1922

LOS ANGELES RECORD

Star Talks of Slain Man

"No, I never was engaged to marry William Desmond Taylor, I regret to say." This statement was made by pretty Mary Miles Minter in an interview at

her home last night.

"Do you know where his ex-wife and daughter are?" Miss Minter was asked.
Miss Minter's violet colored eyes flashed fire.

"Why he had no wife--he was never married. I'm positive of that," she replied.

"But, maybe Mary, he didn't tell you he was married," broke in Mother, Charlotte Shelby.

"But mother, I knew him so well--I am sure he wasn't married. I asked him if he was, and he told me no."

* * * * *

February 11, 1922

LOS ANGELES RECORD

Mrs. J. M. Berger, income tax specialist, talked about William Desmond Taylor who had called at her office just a few hours before he was slain in his bachelor apartments.

"He was here in the afternoon to attend some business," she explained.

"I do not think there is a woman in the case.

"Why--" her white hand pointed to a large picture of Mary Miles Minter that was hanging on the wall of her room.

"Of course little Mary loved Mr. Taylor--who didn't? We all loved him.

"Of course, Mary Miles Minter is only a child.

"Her letters, published, are purely those of a very young girl, and as Mr. Taylor said, 'a child.'

"I had asked him how she was on that day he called here and he said 'she has a touch of tonsillitis and temperament.' "

* * * * *

February 8, 1922

CLEVELAND PRESS

Hardly an hour passed without gossip whispering around the name of some new ingenue of the movies--some sweet, lovely young thing, whose demureness on the screen perhaps has been an example pointed out to thousands of daughters by thousands of mothers--in connection with the supposed chivalries

and romances of William Desmond Taylor.

Things had almost reached a point where stardom seemed to mean close friendship with Taylor--the warmer the friendship the brighter the light of the star.

February 23, 1922
Joe Webb
AUSTIN AMERICAN

Neva Gerber says that despite the fact she and Director Taylor broke their engagement to be married, they remained the best of friends. As Taylor's checkbook showed he had given Neva \$500 a few days before he was murdered, we're inclined to believe they were on tolerably friendly terms.

February 3, 1922
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

"Mr. Taylor was a man who knew everything," said Miss Normand. "If I wanted to know the meaning of an unusual word I did not have to take the trouble to look it up in the dictionary. I just had my secretary telephone Mr. Taylor."

February 9, 1922
SEATTLE UNION-RECORD

William Desmond Taylor was called "the love wizard" by dope-haunted members of the Hollywood film colony.

February 7, 1922
Edward Doherty
NEW YORK NEWS

Taylor was a director with brains and the artistic touch. He made the average director look like what he is--a brainless mechanism braying through a megaphone.

February 9, 1922

DES MOINES REGISTER

Taylor is the first and only man who ever undertook to train an octopus to act.

* * * * *

March 28, 1922

ROCHESTER TIMES-UNION

A dainty handkerchief marked "M.M.M." was found in the murdered movie director's apartment. Maybe they had been playing "drop the handkerchief."

* * * * *

February 28, 1922

Wallace Smith

CHICAGO AMERICAN

Taylor was often referred to as "Simon Legree," [16] whose one care was making a showing before his employers and whose last thought was for the feelings of those he found working under him.

* * * * *

February 8, 1922

CHICAGO POST

According to F. D. Dalton, "Taylor's only fault was periodical drunks. One time he went with a man named Ed Cox and a theatrical troupe to the Hawaiian Islands. Taylor got drunk and wandered to another island in the group and was not found until three months later. Then he was with a hula hula crowd back in the mountains."

* * * * *

February 7, 1922

LOUISVILLE TIMES

Fire Burn and Cauldron Bubble

The movie owner and the movie director have been the men of amours since the flying camera shutter first began to click. Handsome though he be, the leading man has had hard sledding. Now and then a beautiful lady would fall to his portion; and, of course, he had his share of bathing beauties and

roadhouse party-fodder; but the Guineveres, the Elaines, the Cleopatras and the Columbines have worn the tag of owner and director.

These form the higher circle of the fast life on the Camera Coast, and thus the new tragedy in Hollywood is interesting to the public because it deals almost wholly with stars. Poor Fatty Arbuckle was the only luminary in his case because he is an actor and has only limited favors to bestow. But Taylor was a director in the first degree: desirable parts and large salaries went to whom he said they should go.

He had a bijou flat in a bijou row, and it was appointed as a garconniere [17] should be. After the megaphonics of the day the Great Director would retire to this little nest and to him would repair some lady artist to have a quiet nip and to discuss the burning subject of art. The more the Great Director appreciated the qualities of these artists, the greater their opportunities and the larger their salaries. The persistence on the screen of many vulgar and awkward women in star roles proves how much a director can do to make life profitable and pleasing, and his favor is even more important than an owner's. So if he has a little flat and is hospitable to ladies, what more delightful than to visit him as his butler is leaving and clink a refreshing cocktail? Nearly all the lady artists have a "mother" or an "aunt" abiding with them who are so confident of the virtue of their charges that they are lenient with them; and these duennas can arise in time of stress to vow that Maisie was only a casual friend and is a good girl who never had a temperature of over 98.5 in all her life.

Taylor, being unusually well-placed to extend favors to lady artists, and being a dashing fellow withal was popular with the fair and received a number of visitors, for whom an inventory of his effects reveals that he furnished every modern convenience. In many other bijou flats on other bijou rows other directors have been in equal favor, and all in Hollywood was as merry, if not as regular, as a marriage bell.

But the smiles of women bring the frowns of men, and a man who roves with too many sometimes gets in trouble with one. So one night last week the director accompanied his last fair visitor to the limousine. There came

murder and mystery into Hollywood and into the lurid columns devoted to the tragedy came names that were not commercially benefited by it. And the mystery endures, and the blood cries out for vengeance, and before the two are quieted there will be a deal of uneasiness, and shattered feet of clay will be strewn about the fallen images of several golden girls.

It is inevitable. The ingredients of scandal and immorality and tragedy are generously found in movie colonies. Never before in the history of the world have so many women, depending mainly on their beauty, been vying for place and favor from men. Place and favor in the movies have all too frequently gone for a fundamental price eagerly given, cynically received.

(Continued next issue)

NEXT ISSUE:

Why Taylor's Servant Thought Mabel Normand was the Killer

1929 Interview with Charlotte Shelby

"The Humor of a Hollywood Murder":

Mabel's Reading Matter, The Funeral, The Investigation, The Law

Index to A CAST OF KILLERS

NOTES:

[1] NEW YORK NEWS (February 15, 1922)

[2] HONOLULU STAR-BULLETIN (April 25, 1922)

[3] SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (April 25, 1922)

[4] HILO POST-HERALD (April 26, 1922)

[5] As stated in the Introduction, some offensive stereotypes were commonplace in the 20s, and are included here for historical purposes.

[6] Other references to this alleged incident make it clear that this individual is supposedly Wallace Reid.

[7] "hop-joint"-- drug den.

[8] This was reported by Wallace Smith in the CHICAGO AMERICAN (February 10, 1922) but not in these exact words. Smith was reportedly quoting "one of Los Angeles' leading physicians."

[9] For details see Edward Doherty, GALL AND HONEY (Sheed & Ward, 1941), pp. 200-202.

[10] A "space writer" is a derogatory term for a writer paid by the word. Smith and Doherty were on a straight salary.

[11] Aside from Taylor case material, the dispatches of Smith and Doherty during the previous month contained sensational thinly-veiled references to such stars as Douglas Fairbanks, Tom Mix, Ben Turpin, Rudolf Valentino, Mabel Normand, Blanche Sweet, etc.

[12] See Theodore Dreiser, "Hollywood: Its Morals and Manners," SHADOWLAND (November 1921-February 1922).

[13] Wallace Reid.

[14] Frederick James Smith. See LOS ANGELES TIMES (February 19, 1922)

[15] Mabel Normand.

[16] The cruel slave-owning villain of UNCLE TOM'S CABIN.

[17] "garconniere"-- bachelor's quarters.

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.uno.edu/~drif/arbuckle/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>

For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 6 -- June 1993 Editor: Bruce Long *
* All reprinted material is in the public domain *

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What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

Reader input is welcome, in the form of "Letters to the Editor," short articles, and contributed source material.

Why Taylor's Servant Thought Mabel Normand was the Killer

Henry Peavey was certain Mabel killed Taylor for the following reasons. Bear in mind that Peavey was illiterate (undoubtedly the main reason Taylor hired him--after the bad experience with Sands he wanted a valet who wouldn't be reading his mail, snooping in his private papers, etc.), so Peavey knew

almost nothing of the material appearing in the press about the murder--all he really had to go by was his own senses: what he saw, heard, and felt.

1. On the murder night, "Howard Fellows, Taylor's chauffeur, says he was to call Mr. Taylor at 7:30 o'clock. He declares that he called him by phone at that time and got no answer. Twice more he called, with the same result; then he drove the car around into Alvarado Street, parked it near the court and rang the front doorbell. The lights of the house were lit, but no one answered the door. The chauffeur put the car in the garage and went home." [1]

Fellows likewise told Peavey that his first unanswered telephone call to Taylor's had been at 7:30, which was during Mabel Normand's visit. [2] Peavey knew and trusted Fellows, and had no reason to doubt his word, whereas he did not know Davis (Normand's chauffeur), who was Mabel Normand's primary alibi witness. For all Peavey knew, Davis could be lying to protect Mabel Normand, and Taylor could have been dead at 7:30. Why else would the telephone call at 7:30 not be answered? Mabel said that she and Taylor only stood at the curb talking for a few minutes before she departed at 7:45.

2. During his kidnapping by Hearst reporters, Peavey described an incident that had taken place during a previous visit of Mabel's:

(Quoting Peavey) "Some time before this, however, this same actress came over one night and, after looking around, picked up a scissors, pulled down three or four of her pictures from the wall and sat right down on the floor. She then began to cut up her pictures into small bits. Taylor noticed her and said, 'What's the idea?' So she answered, 'I guess I can cut up my own pictures if I want to, can't I?' and he said he guessed she could. I don't know why she cut up her own pictures, but I suppose she had some reason." [3]

The act of cutting up her pictures did not seem, to Peavey, to be the act of a stable person.

3. Because of strong circumstantial evidence, Peavey was certain that Mabel had visited Taylor's home on Tuesday night, the night before the murder.

(Quoting Peavey) "...She was there the night before the murder and again the night that Mr. Taylor was killed. I know that she was with Mr. Taylor on Tuesday night before the Wednesday that he was killed, because she told me so. Wednesday night when she came in Mr. Taylor asked her to have some pudding. She said while I was in the room that she did not care for any pudding that night, but had enjoyed the pudding that she had the night before. Then I learned for the first time what had happened to some pudding that I had left in the ice box on Tuesday night and that was gone Wednesday morning when I arrived at the Taylor home." [4]

That Tuesday visit of Mabel Normand was confirmed by one of the residents of the apartment complex, who saw Taylor and Normand leave together that night. [5] Yet in her post-murder interviews and statements to the investigators, Mabel steadfastly denied having been with Taylor on Tuesday night. Peavey's probable thoughts: If Mabel lied about that visit, she may be lying about much more.

4. The Taylor home was ordinarily a very quiet and tranquil place. Peavey had only seen one person shatter that peace; one person raise her voice to Taylor and argue with him; one person fail to treat Taylor with respect and consideration at all times. The most recent outburst took place less than an hour before Taylor was killed. What Peavey called an "argument" between Mabel and Taylor was referred to by Mabel in one of her statements to the press, recalling her last visit with Taylor:

(Quoting Mabel) "I said to Mr. Taylor, 'Oh, why does your company always produce the stories that are my favorites. Why I would gladly have played in "The Little Minister" or "The Morals of Marcus" because I love them so.'

"It seems curious that part of our last talk should turn on my little disappointment, which seemed so important then, as to be almost a little tragedy of my own, when this great tragedy of Mr. Taylor's life, and mine, too, was to follow right after." [6]

Mabel had a well-known reputation for being feisty and profane. If her "disappointment" truly "seemed so important" at the time, she certainly would

have strongly expressed her feelings to Taylor regarding this "tragedy." Peavey called it an argument; it was certainly more than just a friendly discussion. Of course, it was probably not an argument in the sense of a heated exchange of words--it was one sided and not taken seriously by Taylor. It was also defused when Peavey entered the room and Mabel was amused at Peavey's attire. I would imagine Mabel's words to have been something like this:

("Damn it, Billy, why is it that every time a really good story comes along Lasky's grabs it first? Just look at The Little Minister and The Morals of Marcus--you know goddamned well that either of those would have been just perfect for me--admit it! But what chance does one little girl like me have when competing against a giant fucking corporation like Lasky's? It's not fair, Billy! It's just not fair! You're supposed to be my friend--why don't you do something about it? You know how shitty story material almost wrecked my career when I was with Goldwyn! You bastards at Paramount released over 100 films last year--you gobble up all the good stories like they were peanuts! How's about leaving something for me, huh, Billy?")

The profanity which was a normal part of Mabel's conversation undoubtedly led Peavey to believe the tirade was more serious than it was, but to him it certainly was an argument: "The woman was doing most of the talking. She was mad." [7]

5. Peavey told Woolwine about the argument he had heard. (He did not know what it was about, only that Mabel was giving Taylor hell about something.) Woolwine told Peavey to keep quiet about the argument and to tell no one: "Mr. Woolwine has told me not to talk to nobody." [8] This led Peavey to believe that the argument must have been very important evidence--indeed, it burned at his conscience until he came clean about it in 1930. So Peavey knew there was a cover-up designed to protect Mabel; if his statement had been silenced, how much other evidence against Mabel had also been covered up?

"(question by a reporter) You told Dr. Filben that when the district

attorney was questioning you, you said repeatedly 'Why do you pick on me? You know who killed Taylor.' Is that right?"

"(answer by Peavey) Yes, it sure is...They made me think, at the time Mr. Taylor was killed, that if I didn't keep my mouth shut about this quarrel and get out of Los Angeles that they might accuse me of the murder." [9]

Viewed from the perspective of those five points, Peavey's certainty about Mabel Normand's guilt is very easy to understand.

1929 Interview with Charlotte Shelby

December 26, 1929

A. M. Rochlen

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

In a remarkable interview, given exclusively to the LOS ANGELES EXAMINER, Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, mother of Mary Miles Minter, last night for the first time revealed hitherto unknown phases of the William Desmond Taylor murder case.

From the wealth of memories so closely associated with the career of her talented daughter she brought forth details that shed a new light on the many investigations that sought to unravel the tangled threads of the murder of the film director -- a case famous the world over.

"The time for action has come. I'm not going to sit idly and be a target for base rumors and vicious innuendo. there must be some justice in this world -- even for a helpless woman."

Breaking a silence of more than seven eventful years, Mrs. Shelby, one of the dramatic and ever-interesting figures of the Taylor case, thus struck back at the endless chain of "whispers and theories" linking her, as well as others, in the events of that baffling mystery.

Of Mary Miles Minter, who was a film star under Taylor's direction, she had little to say.

What here is disclosed would remain forever in her own heart, she said,

were it not for the rumors, reports and insinuations that are making her life a dreadful dream.

Desiring only to be left alone, Mrs. Shelby now feels that she must cut through the web of whispers and suspicions to bring to an end the repetitions of her name in connection with the case.

And she wants to serve notice that every recourse of law will be brought to bear to stop unwarranted bantering of her name and to force those who have used it to come out in the open.

"I have made complete statements to the proper authorities in the past and I stand ready to do it again if it will help in a sincere and honest effort to solve the mystery of Mr. Taylor's death," Mrs. Shelby said in the interview.

"But somewhere, somehow, this thing has got to stop. I demand it. We cannot go through life like this -- I and my daughter, Margaret. We are not hiding from anyone one anything. All we ask is to be left alone, and somebody has got to help us fight this terrible thing."

For the purpose of an earnest and legitimate investigation, Mrs. Shelby revealed for the first time to THE EXAMINER last night that --

She was not in love with William Desmond Taylor.

She did not make threats against the famous director.

She did not go to Taylor's bungalow at 404B South Alvarado Street at an early morning hour several weeks before the murder, armed with a revolver.

She did not, shortly before the murder, purchase a gun and practice with it.

"I know that some of these things, with many vicious details added, had been whispered around," Mrs. Shelby said.

"How most of them originated, no one knows. Some, I'm sure, were spread by a person formerly in my employ. I know that person and I know the motive. At the proper time and place I shall make known this motive, but in the meantime I am interested in just this:

"I want to find out who circulates these rumors. I want to get definite information of definite statements against me, and then I am going to take

definite action to the limit of my ability and the law."

Mrs. Shelby's blue eyes lost some of their softness as she spoke. Only a few minutes before she came into the room to greet the visitor. Attired in a soft, clinging Viennese gown of golden brown, with brown suede shoes to match, she sat near the window of her charming apartment in a court that looked like a corner of some far-away nook in old Granada.

Outside Christmas crowds and laden automobiles moved back and forth. Margaret Shelby Fillmore, always a close pal and companion of her mother, sat nearby.

The two had but recently returned from Europe. France, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland and Italy. Paris, London, Vienna -- art museums and Florence -- and then all the crash and cruel reverberations of the old Taylor case.

"We arrived in California November 17. For more than three years we lived in Europe. You know, there are many things we do not discuss with the outside world. There are many sorrows one must always bear alone or with those who are very near and close.

"My daughter and I (to Mary Miles Minter, Mrs. Shelby never alluded as "my daughter") traveled and saw everything that was beautiful in old Europe, but now we are back -- and to all this."

As Mrs. Shelby talked, framed against the deep window and the dazzling white walls of the courtyard, there flashed before the interviewer another occasion, almost eight years ago, when Mrs. Shelby was an actress in a drama in which Mary Miles Minter was playing the leading part.

It was in the artistic living room of their home, on North Hobart boulevard, in February 1922. William Desmond Taylor, a man of mystery and romance, a leading figure in the motion picture world, was murdered in his home a few nights before. One by one several beautiful women -- names known throughout the world -- were brought into the case. And Mary Miles Minter, young, vivacious, and then at the height of her artistic career, was one of these.

Mary, her face like a Greek profile of exquisite marble, sat on a couch

and told of her last visit with Taylor -- in the darkened chamber of the undertaking parlors. She had gone there alone to place a beautiful dark red rose on the body of the man who was her director, friend, ideal.

And Mrs. Shelby, close by, listened to the story and watched over Mary.

But yesterday, as the brilliant Christmas afternoon was changing into evening, it was a different story.

"Yes, I remember that night, nearly eight years ago," Mrs. Shelby replied, and paused. "I want to forget it. Of Mary I shall have nothing to say. She is in good hands and can take care of herself, I'm sure.

"In those days my whole life was wrapped up in her. It was my work. Now I must fight for vindication. I've had enough of this, and I am going to ask that they put an end to the case once and for all."

Throughout the entire discussion Mrs. Shelby was careful not to express any opinion on who killed Taylor.

"Mr. Taylor is dead. My daughter Margaret and I are still alive. We must be protected and not crushed by this gossip.

"That's why," she continued, "the truth must be revealed, the truth must be spoken, the truth must be printed.

"Of course I have heard the dastardly whisperings about me and my connection with the case. I have heard them all -- that I was in love with Mr. Taylor, that I owned a gun and used to practice on a target a short time before the murder, that I went to Mr. Taylor's apartment early one morning searching for Mr. Taylor and threatening him with death, that I had made many other threats, and so on and on.

"Each and every one of these rumors and whisperings is ridiculous.

"Let us take them one by one and see," she declared.

"I did have a gun."

"It was given to me by a jeweler friend of ours in Santa Barbara, way back in 1916. That was a long time before Mr. Taylor was killed.

"We were living in Santa Barbara. I was Mary's business manager. I had to read the stories for her pictures, work on the scenarios, watch over her clothes, the cast, everything.

"We lived alone. No men folks in the household. Our friend brought the gun to the house one night. He said I must keep it.

"'But I don't know how to use it. I never held one in my hand before,' I told him.

"'Well, let's learn,' he replied."

Mrs. Shelby smiled.

"You know, this really bears a strange element of humor, now that I look back on it.

"We went out to some open spaces and I took this gun in my right hand. It was a pretty little thing -- had a pearl handle and all that. I pointed the gun at something or other, shut my eyes and pulled hard. The thing went 'boom' and threw my arm back.

"I did that several times in succession. That was all."

"Still, they call it target practice."

Mrs. Shelby said she did not remember what had become of the gun. She says she has no recollection of bringing it back to Los Angeles when the household moved from Santa Barbara.

"That much for target practicing," she declared.

"Now about that visit to Mr. Taylor's house.

"To understand it, I must take you back a few years. I must ask you to keep in mind the fact that Mary was at the height of her career, was making big pictures. We had been in New York. I negotiated new contracts. There were trips and conferences and all that. Many, many details that play no part here, except incidentally as they relate to the contacts made with a former employee for whom I sent to New York and who later figured in the visit story.

"We were back in California. Mary's contract originally called for pictures to be made in New York. One day Mr. Adolph Zukor held a conference with us. It was decided that climatic conditions were better out here on the Coast for the type of picture Mary was making. So we came out.

"Mr. Taylor was Mary's director.

"About the time of this much-discussed visit Mary bought a new car. It

was a big, fast roadster, and Mary liked speed. She used to go out, tearing along the roads at 60 and 70 miles an hour. I was her mother and it worried me -- naturally.

"We were living on Fremont place. At that time of the year there was lots of fog at nights.

"One night Mary did not come home to dinner. We waited and waited. She did not call. We began to worry.

"Perhaps she went to dinner at someone's house, it was suggested to me. We tried to reassure ourselves of this, but somehow I kept worrying about getting no telephone call and about that big, fast car and the foggy roads.

"We began to call up persons at the studio. We called the cameraman and the assistant cameraman. The cameraman, a big, jolly Irishman, was a favorite of Mary's. He was married and had small children. She was fond of children and occasionally stopped at his house. The cameraman told us Mary had not been there. No one could remember seeing her leave the studio.

"We thought Mr. Taylor perhaps would know. But we did not have his phone number. No one seemed to know it.

"Then we remembered that one day Mary and her grandmother, Juliette B. Miles, went to Mr. Taylor's home for tea.

"Chauncey, our chauffeur, drove them, so we called Chauncey and asked him if he knew where Mr. Taylor lived. He said he thought he could find the place but did not know the address.

"So we started out, Chauncey, my secretary and I.

"We drove around and around. the chauffeur said he knew the neighborhood but was not certain of the exact location. Finally he remembered it. We stopped at the corner of Fourth and Alvarado streets. It was close to midnight then.

"Chauncey said he did not know which bungalow was Mr. Taylor's. There were a number of them," Mrs. Shelby went on, making a wide sweep with her right arm. "As I remember it, there were some on the left, some on the right and some bungalows in the back.

"I saw a light burning in a window on the right, so I rang the bell, or

knocked, I don't remember which. Some one answered and I asked them if they knew where Mr. Taylor lived. They pointed to a house on the left side of the court, the last one in the back. I went there and rang the bell. The house was dark.

"Mr. Taylor's voice came from the second story window.

"'Who is there?' he asked."

"'This is Mrs. Shelby, Mr. Taylor,' I answered.

"'I'll be right down,' he replied and in a short time opened the door and asked me to step in.

"I entered the room, a sort of combination living and dining room. Mr. Taylor showed much interest. He, too, appeared worried over Mary's absence. Then he suggested some more persons to call. I waited while he used the telephone.

"I remember that he stepped into a sort of a telephone room -- an out of the way nook, and called. He talked to an assistant director, I think his name was Frank O'Connor, and he called several others. None had seen Mary or knew where she had gone.

"By this time we both were considerably worried.

"After some conversation, in which I mentioned my fears of an accident, I left."

"'Be sure to call me and let me know if anything had happened,' Mr. Taylor said as he bade me goodbye. I went to our car, where Charlotte Whitney, the secretary, waited for me, and we went home.

"I do not now remember the time of this visit. It was not, as has been whispered around, shortly before Mr. Taylor's murder. I did not 'storm' into the house, with a loaded revolver in hand, as has been whispered around. I did not threaten Mr. Taylor, as has been said."

Miss Minter, Mrs. Shelby said, came home some time later.

"She never told us where she had been that night. We were relieved to learn that there had been no accident and that she was well.

"But months later we learned about that trip. Frank Urson, a dear friend of the family, and an old associate from Santa Barbara days, told me

that he had run across Mary, driving her big roadster at 55 miles an hour and that he took her in tow and finally sent her home. He told me he feared she would meet with an accident and warned us against her habit of speeding.

"Certainly," Mrs. Shelby declared, "this incident is not a hot murder mystery clue. Certainly, had there been anything sinister in that night visit, I would not have taken two witnesses me or made public inquiry for Mr. Taylor's residence.

"And yet," Mrs. Shelby went on, "some one related this story and some one has been keeping it alive, until today it is one of the endless chains of clues and rumors that keep bobbing up on the least provocation.

"What's more," Mrs. Shelby declared, this story, along with all sorts of others, was related to former District Attorney Asa Keyes.

"I made a complete statement to Mr. Keyes after he returned from New York. I held back nothing. Why this 'mystery' should be resurrected ever so often, is beyond me."

"To the world in general the Taylor murder case brought thrills, mystery and the glamour of big names, but to others it brought tragedy and sorrow," she said.

There was a long pause.

Perhaps the hectic days of the first Taylor case investigation were ringing through Mrs. Shelby's mind. Perhaps there came a train of thought that carried swiftly the amazing story of Mary's rise and the events that followed her famous director's unexplained murder.

If Mrs. Shelby thought about the \$1,000,000 suit filed by her daughter in 1926 and of her demand for accountings, for audits and for return of money earned in the films, she gave no indication of this.

And if the drama of that intense recital of Mary's visit to the body of Taylor, recalled to her a few minutes before, took her back to memories tinged with the romance of her beautiful daughter, Mrs. Shelby managed to hide her emotions.

Earlier in the interview some allusion was made to Mary Miles Minter's glowing account of the slain director and to the love letters and tokens,

most of them unidentified, found in his apartment after the murder.

"I'm sure, Mr. Taylor was a gentleman," Mrs. Shelby said.

She hesitated a little, and then went on.

"I'm going to rip all this innuendo wide open -- there is no other way," she went on.

"I know that there have been reports that I was in love with Mr. Taylor and that I was jealous of my daughter and also feared that Mary's career would suffer, and that I killed Taylor to preserve my love and Mary's film future.

"I am repeating these things just to show the absurdity of them. How is it possible to have such a double motive? The mere repetition of it shows the absurdity of the whole thing. Killing Mr. Taylor would have wrecked Mary's career instead of saving it.

"But aside from that, the whole thing is ridiculous -- and vicious.

"I am a woman who has always stood alone.

"I was not in love with William Desmond Taylor. I was not in love with anyone. And no one was in love with me. I never held a purely social conversation with Mr. Taylor in my life. He was always aloof, a man of mystery, polished, distant and reserved.

"In those days my tasks and interests were few. I lived, talked, planned and worked only for Mary and her pictures.

"How utterly ridiculous, how unjust and criminal, to cast accusations of such flimsy nature, merely on 'clues' of such thin stuff. A crime without a motive, or reason."

Mrs. Shelby's references to Taylor were most impersonal. In fact, she said during the interview, Taylor himself was impersonal.

She came back to the night of February 1, 1922, when Taylor was shot and killed only a few minutes after the vivacious Mabel Normand, his dinner guest that night, left the bungalow of the man she, along with many others, admired.

She talked of Sands -- Edward F. Sands, the butler-valet of the slain director who robbed and flaunted his employer because he knew of his

checkered past.

Of the incidents leading up to and following the actual slaying of "Bill" Taylor, Mrs. Shelby said but little. She refused to express an opinion. And of Henry Peavey, the colored house boy and cook, who served dinner on the night of the murder and left just before Miss Normand, Mrs. Shelby also had little to say.

"I do not remember seeing him at the Taylor bungalow the night I called to see Mr. Taylor," was all she said.

"But this point seems to be overlooked generally when these vicious whispers are passed about," Mrs. Shelby added.

"The time of the murder was pretty well fixed. Mrs. Douglas MacLean, who heard the shot, saw a man leave the Taylor bungalow. Mrs. MacLean was in her own apartment, and from the front door, only a short distance away, saw this man and described him.

"Do I answer that description?" Mrs. Shelby said smilingly as she rose to her feet and held out her silk-encased arms.

"Dressed in men's clothes? But why" Why would a woman run the extra risk of being detected by wearing clothes in which she at once would become conspicuous?

"This whole affair, however, is far from a jest to us. As I have said before, I have made complete statements and stand ready to make them if needed and if they can be of any use.

"But I will not remain idle and be a target. From now on I am going to seek out those who circulate these rumors.

"I am back in California, the land I love. I am not in seclusion, as has been printed, nor am I hiding from any one or anything. There are some things that I must reserve for the future. Some of them may hold the solution to the motive for the circulation of these cruel rumors."

Mrs. Shelby rose to bid her interviewer good-by.

"You may add," she said smilingly, "that I will remain right here and that if I do move from this charming apartment to our own home, I will not be in seclusion or in hiding."

"The Humor of a Hollywood Murder", Part 3

Mabel's Reading Matter

February 18, 1922

FARGO FORUM

Mabel Normand gave us the best laugh of the week. Did you note the dispatch telling of the fact that a copy of the POLICE GAZETTE was "on the seat of her limousine" while she and her chauffeur were at the curb in front of Mr. Taylor's house?

The laugh comes when you consider that this country rewards, with chauffeurs and limousines, movie actresses whose literary tastes run to the POLICE GAZETTE.

There is a good secondary laugh in Miss Normand's statement that she respected Mr. Taylor and liked "his views on philosophy." It seemed that he discussed Freud, Haeckel and Nietzsche with her. But that copy of The Police Gazette convinces us that Mr. Taylor did most of the discussing, while Mabel concealed her yawns as best she could. Freud and the POLICE GAZETTE! We'll say that Mabel is certainly catholic in her literary tastes.

If you insist on getting excited about the situation, the thing to get excited about, to our way of thinking, is not the fact that Hollywood stages some "wild parties"--they can be found on every Main Street--but the fact that a chit of a girl with a pretty face and an intellect that aspires no higher than the POLICE GAZETTE can earn more in a year than we pay the President of the United States. Surely our standards of values are all wrong.

Maybe we ought to pass a law about it, or have a congressional investigation, or something.

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February 10, 1922

Joe Webb

AUSTIN AMERICAN

Mabel Normand has a copy of the Police Gazette in her car the night she called on Director Taylor, just before he was killed. And that's the first time we ever heard of a POLICE GAZETTE being anywhere except in a barber shop.

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February 24, 1922

CINCINNATI TRIBUNE

Why did Mabel Normand have a copy of the POLICE GAZETTE with her when she called on the slain director? Does not this indicate that she had been to a barber shop immediately before? And if so, could she have taken a copy of The Police Gazette without first slaying the barber?

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February 9, 1922

H. G. Salsinger

DETROIT NEWS

Magazines devoted to motion picture plays and players do a great deal of harm by the nauseating drivel that they print. The silly prattle that is put into the mouths of screen players who are "interviewed" for these magazines and then pen pictures drawn of them are beyond reason. Rex Ingram, a scholar, is not given any better "boost" than a former salesgirl who has suddenly become a headliner. The same superlatives that are used to discuss Ingram are used to describe the brainless cutie whose face is her fortune and whose brain is still in the kindergarten age.

It is a long jump from paperbound novels and chewing gum to Plato and Thoreau, but the facile writer of the screen monthlies blithely makes this leap. It must have been with pain and anguish that the screen fans read how Mabel Normand, pictured as a devotee of Voltaire and Nietzsche, testified that on her way to William Taylor's house on the fatal night she stopped at a newstand to buy a bag of peanuts and a copy of the POLICE GAZETTE.

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February 21, 1922

Scotty

FRESNO REPUBLICAN

When anybody talks about sounding the heights and depths of well read accomplishment they must be familiar with the literary tastes of Miss Mabel Normand. There is a young lady who reads 'em high and reads 'em low. We read in the public prints that she graciously allowed a reporter to interview her about the visit she made to that movie gentleman out in Hollywood and told the young lad that she had gone there for some reading matter to take home with her, the same being a treatise by a gentleman named Nietzsche who writes long paragraphs full of long words and hard to pronounce. About philosophy, and all such like. Then we are assured by Mabel's chauffeur that another treatise which she had obtained on her visit was a copy of the POLICE GAZETTE. And instantly, and at once, and even sooner we say to ourselves that Mabel is there when it comes to literature. She doesn't cultivate one portion of her brain cells at the expense of the others. She is not going to be the possessor of a single track mind. That her mind shall not be a Jack Spratt and his wife sort of mind, but rather a combination of the Spratt variety wherein both fat and lean shall be furnished. When her eyelids droop over the "will to conquer" sort of highbrowism that Nietzsche deals out she can lightly turn to the POLICE GAZETTE and there fill up on beauty unadorned on the outside cover and learn how Kilrain nearly licked old John L., down on the hot sands of the Gulf of Mexico in the long ago. [10] And view the picture and get the name and address of the most popular barber in Lilliwaup Falls, Wash. Or it may even be that she may send a postal to Box, number something somewhere or other, and beg back word where to send five dollars for a deck of marked cards. Between old Mister Nietzsche and the POLICE GAZETTE it's no wonder that Mabel is nervous and confined to her bed.

The Funeral

February 8, 1922

KANSAS CITY TIMES

(Los Angeles. Feb. 7.)--Laughter and screams and prayers marked the funeral here today of William Desmond Taylor, murdered motion picture director.

With two thousand notables of the screen world and their friends seated within St. Paul's Episcopal Pro-Cathedral, a crowd of thirty thousand without fought for admittance. Failing to gain entrance the vast majority of those left on the outside hemmed the streets and overflowed Pershing square. The police were powerless.

And while the Rev. William McCormick, dean of St. Paul's was reading the service and speaking the prayers for the dead prince of Shadowland, shouts and laughter from the jostling, hysterical, riotous throng echoed through the Pro-Cathedral.

"Five a bag, they're hot," yelled peanut vendors. Lemonade stands, hastily constructed, were doing a thriving business.

As the pallbearers, all men mighty in the film world, carried the casket up the aisle and the great organ began the impressive Handel's "Largo," by some curious irony of fate the strains were mingled with those of a jazz band playing in the Philharmonic auditorium a few hundred feet away.

Some of the stars turned their heads at the sound of the jazz, but not a face brightened. This was not a jazz day for them and messengers were quickly sent to the auditorium and the dance music halted.

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February 9, 1922

OMAHA BEE

Proceedings at the funeral of a murder victim indicate that there are at least 30,000 unemployed in Los Angeles.

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February 9, 1922

BOSTON GLOBE

In California a moving picture producer was murdered under circumstances of mystery. His funeral was held in a church. Inside were gathered a party

of famous moving picture actors and actresses, and a throng which packed the church to its doors. Outside, in the street, was a crowd of 30,000 people, which the police were powerless to manage. They fought to get into the church, and the reading of the funeral service by the dean of the cathedral was to an accompaniment of the cries of the women caught in the crowd-pack outside. One of the actresses [11] fainted at the end of the funeral, but the crowd was too dense to allow her to be removed from the church. The negro valet of the deceased had a fit of hysterics.

There was evidently some misunderstanding about this funeral. It seems to have been mistaken for a moving picture scenario. Such a mistake was perhaps natural, what with the stars, the mob, and the emotional scenes. Yet, however much like a scenario this funeral may have seemed, it was not a scenario--it was a real funeral. And in this fact lies its importance.

Try to construct a world conducted according to the principles which seem to govern life in a moving picture scenario, and what would you have? Well, it might be something like society in the moving picture town of Hollywood, Calif,; but it would hardly be like any other place under the moon, unless it were two or three of the livelier circles of Inferno as described by Dante.

A world where love-making is the leading industry. Where the souls of gentleman crooks are saved by a species of sex evangelism. Where the poor girl invariably marries the millionaire and experiences no discomforts from the sudden change in her social status. Where every second policeman is a crook; and all rich men's sons are idle and vicious; and every mother-in-law is a she-dragon; and waiters throw pies at complaining diners; where, if a stranger looks squint-eyed at your girl, the correct thing is to paste him one in the eye; and where, if your sentimental affairs get into a snarl, you take poison or else shoot the gentleman who has incurred your displeasure.

Try living in such a world--even, if it be only a world of the imagination--for a while, and see the frame of mind you fall into. Is it so strange that the gentleman whose funeral was turned into a movie mob scene should have met such an end? Suppose, innocently or otherwise, he had given

offense to an emotional person living in such an hysterical world: what more natural than to translate the scenario into reality, as was done at the funeral itself?

The fact is that few worlds have more influence over our conduct than this world of imagination. It is there that we make or unmake ourselves. With our imaginations under the spell of such a fantastic world as that in the scenarios of filmdom, is it any wonder that so many of the daily events which startle and shame us should seem, like this funeral, to have been translated out of that world of riotous imagination into a world of more or less riotous reality?

The Investigation

February 4, 1922
LONDON TIMES

(Los Angeles)--What the police regard as an important clue was discovered this afternoon. Detectives are investigating a "dope party" given at Hollywood recently, at which cocaine and other drugs were served instead of drinks. Two women, both film actresses, stated that they quarreled over Taylor and fought, ripping the clothes from each other's bodies. Taylor was not present at the party. The police theory is that Taylor's murder was contrived by one of the women, to whose advances he had refused to respond.

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February 6, 1922
LONG BEACH PRESS

"Comb the dope dens of Hollywood!"

This terse order was issued today by Detective Captain David L. Adams, following a conference at police headquarters of all agencies working on the William Desmond Taylor murder mystery.

It was understood that a new clue had been received connecting the supposed slayer of the famed motion picture director with the operations of a

well-organized Hollywood "snowball" ring.

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February 14, 1922

CLEVELAND PRESS

(Los Angeles)--"The queen of the drug fiends" was hunted today in the William Desmond Taylor murder mystery.

This woman, head of a powerful drug ring operating in Hollywood, knows the circumstances of Taylor's killing, in the belief of county officials.

Efforts to locate the "drug queen" have brought about a thorough search of Chinatown where the "hop" was prepared for the orgies in which its customers indulged. Habitual hangouts of drug addicts were deserted today and all known members of the ring, including its queen, have gone into hiding.

Her last place of residence has been searched. A number of interesting names are understood to have been found on her books. The "queen" is described as a woman of beauty who does not show the ravages of the drugs she distributed to the ring's victims.

Tracing the woman's movements during the last few months, officers have found she frequently changed her place of residence but that she always lived near Taylor's home.

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February 17, 1922

NEW YORK NEWS

Frisco Jimmie O'Neill, as he described himself to the police, an ex-pugilist and movie actor of Hollywood, Cal., was picked up last night in Chatham Square by Detective Samuel Massam of the Narcotic Squad. O'Neill, the detectives said, had a "deck" of heroin with him which he had just purchased.

"I've been in the movies three years," O'Neill told Massam, "and out there at Hollywood the dope got me for fair. We used to go out on the lots and shoot ourselves full of dope. It was the regular thing.

"I could get the stuff easy, and the stars and dames used to come to me

and beg for it. Many a swell star I've handed a deck of dope to. I knew Taylor, the director, very well, but never worked under him. I left Hollywood the day before he was killed and came East.

"I've been getting morph right up to now, but today I fell down and had to make a break for the heroin. The dope has got me for fair, just like it's got a lot of the rest of us that played in the lots out Hollywood way."

O'Neill was locked up and will be examined again today by Special Deputy Commissioner Dr. Carleton Simon, in charge of the Narcotic Squad, who questioned him last night about his methods of getting dope both here and in California.

February 16, 1922
NEW YORK HERALD

William Davis, Mabel Normand's chauffeur, was questioned again today. He told of driving Miss Normand to the apartment court in South Alvarado street, of reaching there about 7:15, of seeing Miss Normand disappear into the court in the direction of Taylor's home, of her reappearance with Taylor after about half an hour, of her chatting with Taylor for a moment at the curb and of the actress's waving good-by as the car moved off.

He also told how Henry Peavey, Taylor's butler, left the house while Miss Normand was still there, and of stopping to pass a word with him beside the automobile. This conversation, Davis said today, was brief, for as he comes from the South, he explained, it is not his habit to exchange idle gossip with Southerners of darker hue.

February 15, 1922
NEW YORK EVENING WORLD

District Attorney Woolwine said today that none of the principles in the case has been exonerated. "I refuse absolutely to go into the question of why numerous persons brought into the case have not been exonerated, in view of their apparent satisfactory statements," he said.

February 18, 1922

RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH

They're now trying to work out the Taylor mystery by following leads given by an income tax expert and a drug peddler. If that combination won't work, the case is hopeless.

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February 15, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO CALL-POST

Scores of persons, both in and out of filmland, are being quizzed daily by the district attorney without apparent results. One reason cited for the lack of an arrest was that "You've got to be sure of your ground when you jail a movie celebrity."

There is an ever growing tendency among those close to the case to marvel at the histrionics displayed by some of those questioned. One investigator today explained the lack of progress by proclaiming almost admiringly and with no little awe, "They lie so beautifully."

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February 9, 1922

CLEVELAND PRESS

"Well, have they got you yet?" is now a frequent greeting in the studios. Some of the stars laugh when asked and some don't.

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February 24, 1922

SAVANNAH NEWS

Great progress is reported in the untangling of the Taylor murder case. It has been rather definitely determined that in all probability there seems to be enough evidence, of a circumstantial if not substantial kind, to believe with some show of moral certainty that there was somewhere, either before or after or during the time of the crime, a woman, in some way, directly or indirectly, mixed up with some of the elements connected with the life of the man who was killed. Probably, more startling still, more than one woman!

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February 6, 1922

Edward Doherty

NEW YORK NEWS

A dainty pink silk nightie which adorned one of the drawers of Taylor's bureau was missing. Nobody could tell who had it. It was hinted, however, that a policeman is keeping it, saying it will bring him good luck.

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February 7, 1922

DES MOINES REGISTER

A dainty pink silk nightgown, bearing three initials of a motion picture star of the first magnitude, is held at police headquarters as the latest clue in the William Desmond Taylor murder case. The gown had been in possession of a police detective who has been quietly working along lines of his own.

The little star to whom the garment is said to belong is not a comedienne. She has gained much publicity during the last year because of numerous wealthy and prominent young men who have been seen in her company and to whom she was variously reported as engaged.

Hollywood was shocked by the disclosure. The name of the star involved was on every tongue. Taylor's closest friends professed amazement. They were utterly confused, they said, by the discovery and by the facts now coming to light which indicate the complexity of the dead man's past.

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March 4, 1922

MOVING PICTURE WORLD

(reprinted from OTTAWA JOURNAL)

It is probable that a fair percentage of those who are most closely following the Los Angeles murder case are more anxious to learn the identity of the owner of the nightdress found in the dead man's apartment than that of the murderer.

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February 10, 1922

LOS ANGELES TIMES

The belief of detectives that if Edward F. Sands, valet-secretary to William D. Taylor, killed his employer, he was insane, was bolstered last night by information tending to show that the missing fugitive was mentally deranged.

"I don't know what I'd do if I lost my job and didn't have any money," Sands is reported to have said. "When I get to be 35 years old I'm going to blow my head off. I don't see any use of people living after that age. They're not good for anything."

Sands always carried a .45-caliber Colt revolver, Mr. Brettner said. One morning Mr. Brettner went to Sands's room and found him asleep. He touched him on the shoulder to awaken him. Sands turned over like a flash and pressed the weapon against Mr. Brettner, but when he saw who it was he turned over and went to sleep again without saying a word.

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February 6, 1922

AUSTIN AMERICAN

Army and navy desertion descriptions of Edward F. Strathmore, who is believed to be the same man as Edward F. Sands, missing valet of William D. Taylor, murdered motion picture director, were obtained from the two departments today.

Strathmore is abnormally marked with double nipples on each breast.

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February 9, 1922

ST. LOUIS STAR

A handkerchief, initialed "S," picked up near the body of Movie Director Taylor, is held as evidence against his former valet, Sands. Without decrying the general case against Sands, we submit that this handkerchief is evidence in his favor. What man ever succeeded in getting or keeping a handkerchief with his own initial on it? The editor of the Star has a dozen or more initialed sneeze-cloths, with letters at intervals from A to W, and

not one in the lot could be used as evidence against him if he yielded to his occasional inclination to commit murder.

February 14, 1922
LOS ANGELES RECORD

This startling story laid before District Attorney Thomas Lee Woolwine by a bootlegger was under investigation Tuesday:

"I was delivering liquor in half-pint bottles at the Taylor bungalow. I was carrying it in two cases used to pack automobile tire inner cases. I approached the front door from the side of the house. As I reached the shrubbery at the front of the house I heard the shot.

"I stood for three or four seconds--maybe 10--and I saw a woman leave the Taylor bungalow. She hurried away.

"I said to myself: 'This is no place for me,' and I hurried back to my car. I threw the cases into the automobile with such force that I broke a half dozen of the bottles.

" 'Let's go' I told my chauffeur and we beat it east down the street."

February 12, 1922
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

(Los Angeles)--A group of investigators tonight went to dig up the cellar in the Taylor home. They had been told by an anonymous informant that something of great value was hidden in the cellar; something not money, but which would show a connection between certain persons and the slaying.

They went out armed with picks and shovels and spades, only to find there was no cellar.

February 14, 1922
ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

(Los Angeles)--No official connected with the William Desmond Taylor murder mystery is willing today to declare that any actual progress had been made toward its solution. The officers are at work and still express

determination to do their best to find the slayer of the film director, but found themselves confronted with "too many wild tips," they say, and too few genuine clues. Many of these "tips" live through one edition of a newspaper--and disappear.

The detectives of the Police Department still declare their belief that the case never will be cleared up until Edward F. Sands, the missing former butler-secretary to Taylor, has been discovered. And the Sheriff's deputies are still firm in their contention that Sands had nothing to do with the case.

The air is filled with rumors of "mystery men," "mystery women," "mystery witnesses," "drug peddlers," "jealousy motives" and "revenge theories," but back of them all the fact that Sands had not been found: that the murderer has not been arrested, and that the case is still unsolved.

The investigation has reached a stage which is described by officials directing the inquiry as of "waiting for the unexpected."

* * * * *

February 15, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

After a pitched battle last night between officers and a band of suspected blackmailers and professional gunmen at College Street and North Broadway, eight men were lodged in the County jail where they will be held for investigation and subjected to a severe grilling for possible implication in the William Desmond Taylor slaying.

* * * * *

February 16, 1922

LONG BEACH TELEGRAM

After grilling the eight blackmail suspects captured yesterday in a gun fight with federal officers and deputy sheriffs, post office inspectors today decided they had no connection with the Taylor case.

"We established the fact that these men, who are Russians, did not even know that Taylor had been murdered," the inspector's office told the United Press.

* * * * *

February 6, 1922
ARKANSAS GAZETTE

(Los Angeles)--Henry Peavey, by the way, put all his sewing into a satchel this afternoon, his beautiful pillow tops, his exquisite doilies, his crochet work and his tatting, and prepared to depart from the city.

He called on Captain Adams to let him know of his intentions. "Not so," said Adams. "You will stay in Los Angeles until released."

"I can't stay, captain," said the negro. "I'se very lonesome without Mr. Taylor. I'll sure miss him, captain. Got no one now to squz oranges or lemons for. Got no nice room to do my sewing in. Please let me go."

The captain explained that he wanted Peavey to remain as a material witness, and declared that if he tried to go away he might find himself in another nice sewing room, with free board.

* * * * *

February 21, 1922
DENVER POST

The startling report that a detective has been employed by a big moving picture man to "gum up" the investigation of the murder of William Desmond Taylor, gained circulation late Monday following the latest fiasco in the case.

There have been more blunders in the Taylor case than there have been theories--beginning with the doctor who said Taylor died of stomach trouble.

* * * * *

February 24, 1922
KANSAS CITY STAR

The Hollywood sleuths are now searching the hidden secrets of Los Angeles's Chinatown in the effort to find Taylor's murderer. It would seem that after three weeks of continuous smoke screens, the Hollywood hush squad might have chased the investigators farther from the scene of the murder than that.

* * * * *

February 17, 1922

CHICAGO AMERICAN

(Chicago)--Lou Mary Snyder is a seamstress, ladies' and men's tailor, and can make anything from a handkerchief to a suit of clothes. She was busily stitching away today in her home at 1334 N. Dearborn St. when the telephone rang.

"This is the state's attorney," said a voice. "We would like to interview you concerning the Taylor case--"

"Yes, I'm a tailor," cut in Miss Snyder.

"If it suits you come down to see us at once," the voice continued. "It is in accordance with the request of Mr. Woolwine in Los Angeles."

Miss Snyder hurried to the state's attorney's office. She laid out her cloth, got her tape measure and started to fit the state's attorney in a suit. But they insisted on questioning her concerning the murder of William D. Taylor.

"Why, I thought you wanted a tailor to make a suit out of wine-colored wool," said the surprised seamstress. She was dismissed as the possible Margaret Snyder the state's attorney's office is seeking.

The detectives renewed their search and found the woman Mr. Woolwine was seeking at Rockford, Ill.

* * * * *

February 22, 1922

PASADENA STAR-NEWS

District Attorney Woolwine's office was in the midst of a probe into the Taylor murder mystery. The telephone bell jangled. W. C. Doran answered.

"I gotta hunch on this here murder case!" the mysterious informant told him. "They've got a serum [12] down in Dallas, Texas, that makes people tell the truth. Give 'em a shot in the arm, and veracity spouts like a gusher. Why not give some of those dumb witnesses of yours a dose of that?"

Mr. Doran, after some moments of concentrated effort to grasp the idea, burst into laughter.

Whereupon the amateur scientist on the other end of the wire, highly

indignant, slammed down the receiver.

* * * * *

February 15, 1922

Wallace Smith

CHICAGO AMERICAN

(Los Angeles)--It is now believed that the slayer, before he left Taylor's study, straightened up the room and "laid out" Taylor's body. It was even suggested that a woman may have helped.

"She may have been very fond of him," remarked one of the detectives, with a serious face, "and so tried to leave his body as neat as possible. Also the room. You know how women are."

The Law

February 14, 1922

CLEVELAND PRESS

The Los Angeles police have the Taylor murderer in a net.

They are tightening the net.

They are not certain of the man's name. They do not know what he looks like.

But he is somewhere between New York and Los Angeles and he cannot escape.

The police may catch him any hour. But what year, they cannot say.

* * * * *

February 9, 1922

OAKLAND TRIBUNE

A man was murdered one week ago in Los Angeles. Since then the police authorities have given the most exemplary imitation of polite and tender dealing yet recorded in the annals of crime. The only judgment one can form is that the police are afraid to discover the responsibility for the murderer. The campaign to corral all the tourist trade on the Pacific Coast

was not supposed to lead Los Angeles to such lengths.

* * * * *

February 12, 1922

PORTLAND OREGONIAN

Edward "Hoot" Gibson declared that the Taylor murder and subsequent publicity would eventually cost the film industry millions of dollars. He charged the police of Los Angeles with "four-flushing" and "keystone cop antics."

"The real murderer has fooled them and to make a showing they are dragging in the names of famous stars to divert public attention," he said.

* * * * *

February 10, 1922

RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH

Los Angeles Police declare they see signs of a plot to defeat justice. Chances are they've also heard the signs clinking.

* * * * *

February 17, 1922

SEATTLE STAR

We don't believe anybody is spending a lot of money to thwart the Los Angeles police. Why go to such unnecessary expense?

* * * * *

February 17, 1922

G. K. Hanchett

BOSTON ADVERTISER

Studios in Hollywood are closely guarded during the Taylor probe. Even the police can't seem to get an admission.

* * * * *

February 25, 1922

RUTLAND HERALD

Practical detectives do not take much stock in the Sherlock Holmes methods of detecting crime, but there is one thing in such stories that must be agreed to, and that is that meddling amateurs or stupid professionals

sometimes "mess up" crime clues beyond all finding.

Just as Dr. Doyle's fiction detective used to anathematize the bunglers who destroyed foot-prints, removed clues or allowed priceless indications to pass unobserved, just so, we imagine, the officers concerned in the Desmond Taylor case must feel toward a few score of amateurs, reporters and "nuts" who have messed up the hot trail of the killer.

If the murderer of Taylor is ever apprehended, it will be because some skilled and experienced officer, discarding all vague, wild, fantastic and fabricated theories, starts at the ghastly beginning and works forward soberly and carefully toward the end. And in doing that it is almost certain that he will be immensely hampered by the mess of the bunglers who have gone before.

It has been stated that clever criminals keep out of the way of the police by reading the newspapers. Certainly if some officers tell as much about their plans as some newspapers would have us believe they must warn their quarry a long time in advance.

* * * * *

February 24, 1922

NEW YORK EVENING WORLD

"Bluecoats are running wild in Hollywood these days," says the First National praise agent in boosting Buster Keaton's new film "Cops." The daily news stories would go to prove the same contention.

* * * * *

February 17, 1922

NEW YORK HERALD

A third of the detectives hunting for the criminal in a sensational murder case have the grippe, [13] thus winning relief from the ancient jest which represents a detective as unable to catch even a disease.

* * * * *

February 21, 1922

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The Taylor Case in Los Angeles Shows Incompetency of Police

The search--if one can call it a search--being made for the slayer of Motion Picture Director Taylor in Los Angeles is getting on the nerves of everybody, and the police should either produce the killer or turn the job of hunting for him over to competent persons. It seems as if every one who knew Taylor or could in any fashion be connected with the case has been interrogated at least a half dozen times. The police and the fame-seeking District Attorney of the California metropolis apparently have questioned persons who had no more to do with Taylor's murder than the residents of the Canary Islands. One Woolwine, District Attorney, made what he called an independent investigation, with a camera-man tagging him around and reporters in his following. Woolwine posed in the Taylor house with an assistant taking the part of the picture director--this being done to "reconstruct the crime." How would that help find the criminal? In their efforts the police and the Woolwine force have sent several reputable actresses into retirement, suffering from nervous prostration, and have cast some slight suspicion on a few persons who could not possibly kill another. The time has come for these Los Angeles sleuths and Woolwine and his actors to get off the job, and devote their time to whatever business may be at hand. Skilled detectives should take over the case and follow it to the end. Motion picture makers of Hollywood have raised a fund to hunt down Taylor's slayer, and they can put it to good use by dealing with a reputable detective agency and ignoring the incompetents of the police force and the District Attorney of Los Angeles.

* * * * *

February 23, 1922

TAMPA TRIBUNE

This isn't the silly season; then why in the name of decency and common sense are the incompetent officials of California undertaking to excuse their own failure by talking of a conspiracy to shield a murderer?

* * * * *

February 15, 1922

Tom Cannon

GARY POST-TRIBUNE

What is needed, perhaps, is an investigation of the investigators.

(Continued next issue)

Index to A CAST OF KILLERS

The first book-length examination of the Taylor case was A CAST OF KILLERS by Sidney Kirkpatrick. Although it contains some interesting information, the book lacks an index, which is frustrating for serious researchers. The following index was hastily compiled and pertains to the major characters in the murder and investigation.

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NEXT ISSUE:

The Case Against Thomas Dixon

Fragments from the Police File

"The Humor of a Hollywood Murder" Part 4:

Love Letters, Frozen Horror, Untamed Hollywood, Frank Mayo vs. The Press

NOTES:

- [1]NEW YORK NEWS (February 9, 1922)
- [2]See LOS ANGELES RECORD (January 7, 1930)
- [3]SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER (February 21, 1922)
- [4]LOS ANGELES TIMES (February 6, 1922)
- [5]LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 12, 1922)
- [6]LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (February 15, 1922)
- [7]LOS ANGELES RECORD (January 7, 1930)
- [8]LOS ANGELES RECORD (February 13, 1922)

[9]LOS ANGELES RECORD (January 7, 1930)

[10]Kilrain vs. Sullivan was the last world championship bareknuckle prizefight.

[11]Mabel Normand.

[12]Scopolamine.

[13]"grippe"- influenza.

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.uno.edu/~drif/arbuckle/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>

For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 7 -- July 1993 Editor: Bruce Long *
* All reprinted material is in the public domain *

CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE:

The Case Against Thomas Dixon
Fragments from the Police File
"The Humor of a Hollywood Murder" Part 4:
Love Letters, Frozen Horror, Untamed Hollywood,
Frank Mayo vs. The Press, Tall Tales #1: Walter Underwood

What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

Reader input is welcome, in the form of "Letters to the Editor," short articles, and contributed source material.

The Case Against Thomas Dixon

If the early press reports are to be believed, Thomas Dixon was once a prime suspect in the murder of Taylor, but he was soon overshadowed by a flood of other suspects. When director King Vidor gained access to the police file in the mid-1960s, it appears that any references to Dixon had long been purged

from the files, except for the one reference in Mary Miles Minter's official statement. Following, in chronological order, are some press items which refer to Dixon, linking him with Mary Miles Minter prior to Taylor's murder, or suggesting his involvement in murder.

* * * * *

December 28, 1921
LOS ANGELES TIMES

A romance of interest to filmdom and the public, soon to be consummated in marriage, if all reports are to be believed, is that between Mary Miles Minter, Lasky star, and T. E. Dixon, son of the lead-pencil king.

Mr. Dixon has just arrived in the city and is a guest at the Ambassador. Asked concerning the romance he did not deny the engagement. Miss Minter herself, when she came from a visit to New York so long ago as a year ago last summer, admitted to a TIMES representative she was engaged to Mr. Dixon.

At that time she said business matters connected with her film work caused her to desire to keep the engagement a secret, but she showed a handsome diamond and ruby ring, the gift of her fiance. Mr. Dixon said yesterday that business had brought him West.

...Miss Minter met Mr. Dixon when on a visit to New York.

* * * * *

January 7, 1922
BILLBOARD

The pretty blonde motion picture star, Mary Miles Minter, has been engaged so many times to various millionaires that when we hear a rumor circulated that the knot has at last been tied we are prone to look upon it as another publicity stunt issued by the overactive brain of a hard-working press agent.

The gentlemanly bridegroom in the present case happens to be Thomas E. Dixon, son of a millionaire pencil manufacturer. The rumor says that at a Christmas party held in Hollywood, Cal, the young couple evaded their friends and ran off, to be married.

The mother of Miss Minter, Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, left New York for the

Coast December 28, and before going she is quoted as saying that she knew her daughter was engaged to Mr. Dixon, but that she did not believe there was any truth in the report of her sudden marriage.

...Mr. Dixon is 27, a Yale graduate, and was a captain in the Aviation Corps during the war. He makes his headquarters at the Yale Club in New York City, but left for California three weeks ago.

* * * * *

December 29, 1921
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Mary Miles Minter, film star, and Tommy Dixon, heir to the Dixon lead-pencil millions, denied their engagement in concert last night.

"People are continually announcing engagements for me that I know nothing whatever about," said Miss Minter. "Tommy and I are just good friends, aren't we Tommy?" and Tommy nodded his head mechanically like a reluctant little boy who had been coached against his will.

...

* * * * *

April 1922
PICTURE PLAY

(from a description of the wedding of Lottie Pickford and Alan Forest, which took place on Jan. 7, 1922)

Among those present were:...Mary Miles Minter, Thomas Dixon...

...Although Mary Miles Minter says she is not engaged to Thomas Dixon, son of the leading pencil manufacturer, she evidently finds him an ideal escort. And her mother doesn't object to having the young folks slip away to the movies in the evening.

* * * * *

January 21, 1922
LOS ANGELES EXPRESS

(from an interview with Mary Miles Minter on the movie set) ..."It's the first time he [Dixon] has been here in two weeks," Miss Minter said. "I would like for the world to know that Mr. Dixon is a very dear friend--a

charming fellow--a wonderful acquaintance, but he is not my affiance.

"...I have known Mr. Dixon for five years.

"I met him in 1917, when I was touring around trying to do my little bit in Liberty Loan campaigns.

"Since that time we have been the best of friends. About one year ago we became engaged--but it was a conditional engagement. We kept it secret for that reason.

"When Mr. Dixon came to California during the holidays the engagement was called off, despite rumors to the contrary. And that's all.

"I have not seen much of him recently, and it is by the merest coincidence that he is visiting in the studio today.

"I regard him as a friend. But I do not love him. And, until I love someone, I will never marry.

"That's the true story of my romance, if romance it has been. To me, however, it has just been a dear, sweet friendship, and my real romance is yet to come."

* * * * *

February 3, 1922

LOS ANGELES RECORD

Detectives today were known to be quietly seeking a young New York broker, whose identity is being kept secret, to question him in an effort to bring to light more facts about the murder. This young man is said to have been prominent in movie society. He is described as a friend of a prominent movie actress. ...Detectives gave no intimation of what light they believed he might possibly shed on the mysterious slaying.

* * * * *

February 6, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

The EXAMINER learned late tonight that a prominent rich young New Yorker, formerly engaged to marry one of the most beautiful stars in the film world, has mysteriously disappeared, and because this actress was a close friend of William D. Taylor, the director murdered in his home last Wednesday

night, a nation-wide search has been instituted for the missing man. He is reported to have checked out of his hotel last Wednesday afternoon and to have departed from Los Angeles the following day, shortly after Taylor's body was discovered.

...According to the authorities, this man was jealous of Taylor and upbraided the actress for having anything to do with the director. He is said to have employed one or more men to follow her, and on one occasion recently, when she visited the Taylor bungalow, to have flown into a rage. This occurred several hours after the visit, when his detectives reported the matter to him. A stormy scene ensued and the actress is said to have broken off her engagement on the spot. Efforts toward a reconciliation were made later by the young man, but to no avail and he is said to have been brooding and drinking heavily ever since.

* * * * *

February 6, 1922

NEW YORK JOURNAL

...Detectives today are centering their investigation of the film director's murder on information about a triangular love affair, in which the slain man, a popular screen actress and a scion of a wealthy Eastern family are said to have played the leading roles.

...The new love triangle theory projected itself strongly into the case today when the police announced that they had learned a wealthy young New Yorker, at one time reported engaged to marry a leading actress of the film world, had mysteriously dropped from sight the day following the murder of Taylor.

Other investigators learned that the actress in question was a close friend of the murdered man, and are proceeding on a theory that the former fiance, discovering the close relationship existing between the screen star and director, may have been driven to commit murder by his rage which followed this revelation.

...Announcement was made that investigators have been detailed to trace the movements of the young man, who checked out of one of the leading hotels

of the city the day after the murder and has not been seen by friends since.

Police are acting on the report that the suspect fled to San Diego in hopes of escaping across the border into Tiajuana.

* * * * *

February 7, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Located by the EXAMINER late last night and questioned until midnight by Deputy Sheriff Harvey Bell and George Pross, manager of the Burns Detective Agency, the wealthy young New Yorker, who had been engaged to a motion picture star frequently mentioned in connection with the William D. Taylor murder mystery, gave an account of himself, which, in the opinion of the officers, practically eliminates him from consideration.

The examination of the young man occurred in a downtown hotel and was of special interest because of his close attentions to two of the actresses most conspicuous in the social life of Taylor.

He was able, state the officers, to account for every hour of his time on the night of the murder. Interest had centered in this picturesque character for several days, largely because he was known as the rejected suitor of the star who, herself, was said to be infatuated with Taylor.

Police and sheriff's officers were instructed to find this man, who had checked out from the fashionable hotel where he was a guest on Wednesday afternoon and, apparently, had disappeared.

Information coming to THE EXAMINER late yesterday afternoon enabled one of its representatives to locate him. He was found in his room at a downtown hotel and his interrogation followed.

His elimination is regarded by the police as one of the most important contributions to the case in that it removes a possibility which had engaged the efforts of several officers, and thus narrows the field in which investigation must be prosecuted.

* * * * *

(from Minter's official statement to W.A. Doran, made on February 7, 1922)
..."Thomas Dickson [sic] is the only one to whom I have been even remotely

engaged, and that was a freak of despondency."

* * * * *

February 8, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

The angle eliminated today was the theory that the New York broker who came here, ostensibly to marry Miss Mary Miles Minter, might have slain the director out of jealousy. It was well known that Taylor idolized the girl. It was learned today, however, that the young man did not flee the city the day after the murder from any apprehension. The management of the hotel at which he was guest, had requested him to leave. The broker brought a film actor and two extra girls into his room.

It is declared that the quartet was noisy and that people in nearby rooms summoned the hotel detective. The latter declares there was much drink in the place. He says further that when he asked the women to leave the men assaulted him.

* * * * *

February 9, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

One of the theories related to a wealthy young man who had been in love with her [Minter], was known to be extremely jealous and of highly emotional character.

Until today it had been supposed that this young man had been eliminated from the case having, as it appeared, furnished a complete alibi.

But a checking up on persons to whom this man referred for his alibi brought forth the startling revelation that they had not been with him the night of the murder, as he had claimed.

It will now be necessary for this person to supply other evidence of his movements on the night of February 1 or his arrest as a suspect undoubtedly will follow.

* * * * *

February 9, 1922

CHICAGO DAILY NEWS

Here is the theory of the Taylor murder mystery that is coming to be accepted by criminal investigators from Sheriff Traeger's office, a theory not without certain substantiation that the investigators have quietly been gathering the last forty-eight hours.

...She [Minter] flouted one who had formerly been the most favored of her suitors, treated him with open contempt. She snapped her fingers at him in disdain, and, when she did, there grew in his heart a hate for Taylor as unreasoning as the star's affection.

He went to Taylor's home on the night of Feb. 1, according to the theory, first to suggest, then to threaten and demand that Taylor break with the girl--his girl. ...Hate broke the leash and the despised and rejected suitor turned loose the weapon he had brought to use only as a last resort. He fired.

* * * * *

February 11, 1922
SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

A young New Yorker, whose father is a wealthy manufacturer, has been brought under suspicion because of his devotion to the same pretty actress. He has been hanging around Hollywood, and reports, now believed to have had their inception in his own love-sick brain, that he was engaged to the actress, have been circulated. He was questioned early in the police investigation and gave what appeared to be a satisfactory story of his whereabouts. Persons whose names he brought into the statement of his movements on the night in question have contradicted him, according to the investigators, and this has brought him under the shadow again.

* * * * *

February 12, 1922
NEW YORK AMERICAN

Arthur James, motion picture writer and an authority on the cinema, made a spirited defense of Mary Miles Minter last night. He has known the Los Angeles star and her family since Mary's babyhood.

He told this story of her recent reported betrothal to a young broker

here:

"The poor youngster is so pursued by admirers that she sometimes is compelled to say yes when they propose to her, in the hope of getting rid of them. Now this latest affair:

"The young chap bothered her to marry him until one day she said she would--in Los Angeles on New Year's Day. It was a jest.

"Well, on New Year's day the young man appeared in Los Angeles and telephoned Mary to remind her that it was her wedding day. She was at a family dinner.

"She exclaimed that she had forgotten all about the wedding and that she would have to beg off. No doubt she likes the young fellow, but I don't believe she ever took the affair seriously."

Fragments from the Police File

(From official transcribed statements made to the district attorney
during the investigation into Taylor's murder)

* * * * *

(February 1922 interrogation of Arthur Hoyt, one of Taylor's friends)

Hoyt: Mind you, I am saying this from memory, but he [Taylor] said, "What am I going to do? She [Minter] comes here--threatens to make a scene. I try to get rid of her, doing all in my power--finally, when I did get her to go, she said, 'Well, you will have to drive me home,'" and he said, "No, you got here and you will have to go alone."

* * * * *

(February 1922 interrogation of Harry Fellows, Taylor's Assistant Director)

Q: Did she [Miss Minter] appear fond of him?

A: Yes, she did seem to be very fond of Mr. Taylor--and seemed to chase him around the studio and things like that. As far as I know, Mr. Taylor

never really thought an awful lot of Miss Minter--I mean more than just to like her for a nice little girl....He thought more of Miss Normand than he did of anyone I have ever known.

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(February 1922 interrogation of W. A. Robertson, one of Taylor's friends)

Q: Were you ever present when Mr. Taylor mentioned Mary Miles Minter?

A: Yes--last Saturday night.

Q: Who if anyone else was present?

A: Mr. Hoyt. He [Mr. Taylor] said she had been pestivating around there and got to be a great deal of annoyance: she would come to his house and kick up a fuss.

Q: What did he tell you about her kicking up a fuss?

A: She threatened to scream. She was very obnoxious to him.

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(March 1926 interrogation of J. Marjorie Berger, Taylor's tax accountant)

Berger: I arrived at my office between 7 and 7:30 on the morning of Feb. 2, 1922. My telephone was ringing. I answered the phone. Mrs. Charlotte Shelby said "Marjorie, I have something terrible to tell you. The man that was in your office yesterday afternoon is no more. He is dead." I said what do you mean? What do you know about it? Where are you now? She said "I am at the New Hampshire home." I said, "Well, aren't you afraid to be alone?" She said, "Well, Mr. Smith stayed in the house last night."

Love Letters [1]

February 9, 1922

ST. LOUIS STAR

"I love you, I love you, I love you," wrote the movie actress to the late film director, thereby proving that movie actresses do, after all, have a pretty large vocabulary.

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February 9, 1922

PITTSBURGH POST

Those love letters in Hollywood screenland show how far some women will mush along to keep from washing dishes.

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February 10, 1922

Bide Dudley

NEW YORK EVENING WORLD

In our opinion the love letter, so-called, written by Mary Miles Minter to Taylor, the film director, who was murdered, means nothing at all of importance. Being personally acquainted with Mary and her family, we are familiar with the little film star's nature and we are sure she might write just such a letter to any man friend who had been her benefactor and admirer. She would mean nothing by it other than an expression of such love as a happy-go-lucky girl might have for her father or an uncle. Everybody calls Mary "Dear," and every good friend of hers, male or female, kisses her when they meet. In the theatrical and film world a kiss isn't a very serious affair. Mary has always been a carefree innocent girl, closely chaperoned by her mother, a very estimable Southern lady. We saw Mary in New York last June, just before she sailed for Europe, and in front of fifty people at a dinner at the Hotel Biltmore she kissed us. We mention this so that, after we are shot, it won't be used to besmirch the reputation of Mary Miles Minter, who is today just as sweet and innocent as she was when she appeared as the

barefoot kiddie in "The Littlest Rebel" eight years ago.

* * * * *

February 11, 1922

DETROIT NEWS

"Why Were Mabel Normand's Letters Put Into a Boot!"--Headline in the Taylor case.

We give up. Why WERE Mabel Normand's letters put into a boot?

Because maybe they were foot notes!

* * * * *

February 11, 1922

James Schermerhorn

DETROIT TIMES

The dumb darling of the photo drama who indicated her adoration of the wonderman director by painting a picture of life with him in the hills, he fetching the water and doing the cooking (she can only make tea) while she divided her time between dusting and cuddling in his arms in some soft, flimsy stuff, offers the most tangible clue in the connection with the taking off of William Desmond Taylor.

What was there to live for, with an eternity in the kitchen confronting the cultured man?

* * * * *

February 14, 1922

NASHVILLE BANNER

Mabel Normand's "Blessed Baby" letters to the now defunct William Taylor were found in an old boot in the Taylor residence. And it was because of such letters as Mabel and Mary Miles Minter wrote him that Taylor put his foot in it.

* * * * *

February 15, 1922

SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS

To "Six-Cylinder Love," "Spanish Love," and "Desert Love," [2] the Taylor case has added "Four X Love."

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February 15, 1922

DETROIT NEWS

Most of the folly and most of the ecstasy of the world has been written into love letters. Down Los Angeles way the sudden taking off of a motion picture director has revealed in superlative quantity the common impulse that exists to let the emotions expand under the witching stimulus of a flowing pen. One love letter is very like another; in this one thing the world changeth never. It has all been said. Dido might have held the pen of Mabel Normand in the hour she suspected Aeneas had his mind set on his famous getaway; Cleopatra might have written like the Minter girl when Antony's eye seemed to be roving a trifle free. Nothing original is to be found in love-letters, probably because there is nothing original in love. This is not astonishing. The thing that bemuses understanding is that in this day of highly-developed inventive genius no substitute has been adopted for the paper-and-pen love letter. What is disappearing ink for if not kindly to erase the follies of yesterday under the blushing second thought of today?

Should it not be a Medean law that all love letters are returnable to the sender by registered return mail, special delivery? Apparently the itch to write may not be appeased and the letters must be written; but must we and our children and generations yet unborn forever read and re-read the eternal secret of what one person thinks of another in that "first fine careless rapture," or otherwise, which is found in the love letter?

* * * * *

February 15, 1922

CLEVELAND PRESS

We must admit we are greatly astonished by the number of letters found in Taylor's home. We had no idea there were that many movie actresses who knew how to read and write.

* * * * *

February 15, 1922

Sophie Irene Loeb

Written Words, Like Bullets, Can Never Be Recalled

"Do right and fear no man,
Don't write, and fear no woman."

How many tragedies would be averted if these two simple lines were followed.

And now the latest one is filling the pages of the press, in which a murder was committed, and in which love letters play a highly prominent part.

Doubtless Mabel Normand is at present wishing she had never written those letters to William D. Taylor, because of the great trouble they have already caused her in this complex situation.

People do not realize how silly they can be until they read over the love letters that they wrote long after the love is gone.

And when they appear in cold type, in the headlines of a newspaper, they look foolish indeed. Only a person who has been the writer can understand the feeling of seeing his lovelorn missives, written at midnight, just after seeing him or her, finally brought out in the broad daylight where everybody can see them.

Young people should be very careful to whom they write love letters. Better say it with words and save the pricks, that come from a pen-point.

As to the case mentioned, I cannot help wishing that Mr. Taylor had either burned Miss Normand's letters or returned them to her. Had he followed the wisdom of the great poet of his country, he would not have failed to do this. For Kipling has wisely put this way as the only way for a gentleman to follow:

"If She have written a letter, delay not an instant, but burn it."

* * * * *

February 16, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO BULLETIN

Much of the most sensational matter has been, with more or less wisdom, suppressed or diluted, and much can never be printed in any family newspaper. One of the stars whose name has been brought into the case with regularity--

not Miss Normand--went so far as to threaten one of the newspapers with a libel suit but changed her mind when informed that a photographic copy of the letter that had been partly published, [3] was kept and would be exhibited in court should suit be brought. There will be no suit.

* * * * *

February 18, 1922
HARTFORD COURANT

A great many ways have been devised by means of which the average person may waste a lot of time, but we think the most perfect plan yet suggested is the deciphering of the code letters received by the late motion picture director William Desmond Taylor.

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February 18, 1922
TULSA TRIBUNE

Some day there will be a law against the publication of love letters written by women. It is a brutal and needless expose of the weaker sex's emotionalism.

* * * * *

February 21, 1922
Adela Rogers St. Johns
L.A. EXAMINER

Nobody can keep a lot of fool girls with blond curls from falling in love with a man. No one can keep them from writing notes to him, if they haven't been taught that love letters are the most dangerous things in the world to sign except checks.

* * * * *

February 22, 1922
MEMPHIS NEWS SCIMITAR

A whole lot depends on location. For instance X in algebra is said to represent the unknown quantity; on a greenback it has the voice of 10 silver bucks, or a hundred dimes. On a Hollywood perfumed note it puts you under suspicion--no matter what your chauffeur says.

* * * * *

February 24, 1922

CINCINNATI TRIBUNE

Of what significance is the fact that letters from Mary Miles Minter were found in one of the slain man's boots? Does this prove anything other than his boot was too large for his foot and that he had stuffed the toe a bit?

* * * * *

March 2, 1922

SEATTLE UNION-RECORD

One movie stars writes love notes like a 13-year-old grammar school girl; another reads the POLICE GAZETTE. Where is this wonderful artistic taste that the movie people have been telling us about?

* * * * *

March 3, 1922

SACRAMENTO BEE

In writing to a movie queen (or king) it is always well to refrain from expressions of love, and also not to sign your name, otherwise, in case of murder, detectives may nab you immediately, on suspicion, and publish to all the world your tender missives.

* * * * *

March 18, 1922

Irma

MOVIE WEEKLY

Have you heard about how all the girls in Hollywood are rushing madly to get their letters back from their sweethearts old and new? Why, sweethearts away back as far as the third before the last are being begged for their letters!

Just perfectly nice girls are as anxious as can be. Because, as one of them said to me--she's engaged to a film star--no matter how innocuous your letters may be, if you're in love with a man you're just bound to write mushy stuff that would look awfully silly in print. Who can tell when something

might happen to him, and they might be using that goo stuff as evidence!

* * * * *

February 11, 1922

NEW YORK MAIL

Certain tender missives found in the rooms of a man who was murdered in California are causing no end of trouble for the ladies who wrote them. Even though they may be nothing more than innocent expressions of pure affection, the authors doubtless are agonizing over the possibility that they may be read by a laughing public.

It makes little difference that about 98 per cent of the adult readers have written love notes themselves. There is a curious quirk in the average mind that always regards a love letter--another's love letter, of course--as funny. Yet boys and girls go on writing them, and so do men and women, and every once in a while they keep turning up at awkward moments to plague the writers beyond measure.

What, then! Shall people stop writing them? Heaven forbid! When love itself goes out of fashion, when moonlight and starshine cease to play pranks with the emotions, when a scented envelope loses its charm, when men are too cold to thrill and women too indifferent to please, when sense has outlawed sensibility, when all the Omars shall cling only to barren reason--then and not until then shall the love note be outlawed, without benefit of clergy.

Discretion, to be sure, would prevent the sending of many a dainty confection of words, but who is Discretion that he should pretend to be a lover? It was of Discretion that Hafiz was thinking when, as Kipling translates him, he advises that a letter from "Her" should be burned, adding: "Tear it to pieces, O Fool, and the wind to her mate will return it." But just now the question is not of letters to any "Her" who has an obstreperous mate in the background.

It was Emerson--or was it?--who advised one to walk ten miles before writing one letter. But that is nonsense. There is a better and safer way than that, if one must court safety. And that is to write the letter, to put one's soul into its composition, to write singing words fit for Philomel's

melody--and then to tear it up without sending it.

Frozen Horror

February 8, 1922

LOUISVILLE COURIER-JOURNAL

Moviedom's New Art

Taylor, the Hollywood movie director, will not have died in vain if his death shall have taught some of the screen "stars" to act.

Mary Miles Minter, who admits she wrote to Taylor scented notes laden with X's and "I love you--I love you--I love you," discovered, by looking into a mirror, that she could act when she heard of Taylor's murder. "It was terrible," says Mary. "I rushed at once to my mirror and looked at my face. I was appalled. I kept the expression and hurried to mama.

" 'Mama,' I cried, 'did you ever see this expression on my face before?'

" 'No,' she said. 'It is perfect frozen horror. You've never done it before.' " [4]

Now if Mary can only keep that frozen horror in cold storage until she can get it on the screen in her next picture, movie fans may yet see on Mary's face something which, like Mary's mother, they never saw there before.

And if Mary has been stirred to deep facial emotion by Taylor's taking off, is it not likely that many, many other screen stars were similarly stirred? Mary was only one of those stars whose orbits encircled Taylor. It may be that these others lacked Mary's thought to rush to mirrors and inspect their faces when they heard of Taylor's assassination: that they failed to grip the frozen horrors thus revealed and before they melted hurry away to mammas or other witnesses just as good. But no doubt they have learned a lesson from Mary and will be better prepared to improve their opportunity the next time one of their dear ones is snuffed out. Probably they could cut out the rush to mirrors, for do they not carry mirrors around with their powder rags, anyway; while as for mamma, to make sure of having her within reaching

distance before the thaw, couldn't they declare a Pekingeses holiday and attach the leash to mamma?

There would seem to be great possibilities of Mary's discovery how to acquire new facial expressions. In a free and easy colony like Hollywood it ought not be difficult to provide for the slaughter of some loved one whenever a star feels the need of a shock that will be good for a frozen horror or other similar tragic refrigeration.

Moreover, this field for the renaissance, or origination, of the art of acting in moviedom which Miss Minter has opened up is by no means limited to the production of emotions of horror and grief. It should be even more fertile in products of joy, exultation and ecstasy. If a star could fill an icehouse with frozen horror for use in the films by having one of her lovers snickersneed, [5] she could lay in a yet more plentiful stock of joy by having one of her enemies kiboshed. And with its rivalries and jealousies, moviedom abounds even more in enemies than in lovers. None of its stars would ever be at a loss to pick out an enemy for the butcher whenever she felt the need of a boost of her joy emotions. The supply of enemies would last as long as moviedom lasted.

There would be the rub. With such a system of stimulating acting in practice, how long would moviedom--Hollywood, at least--last? Might not Hollywood, by the incessant slaughter of lovers and enemies, ultimately be exterminated?

Even so, there seem to be some people who would not be inconsolable for that. For instance, there is that Eastern moving picture magnate, Herbert Brenon, who thinks "it would be a jolly good thing if Hollywood were abolished" at once. [6]

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February 10, 1922

LOUISVILLE COURIER-JOURNAL

For the broadening of Mary Miles Minter's newly discovered art it is a pity that this twinkling screen star was not in rushing distance of a mirror so that she could have discovered what was the frozen expression on her face

when she saw that Mabel Normand beat her to it and fainted dead away right there in front of the whole show at the Taylor funeral.

* * * * *

February 12, 1922

JACKSON NEWS

Mary's Horror

For an original way of displaying deep emotion at the death of a friend, Mary Miles Minter wins the lace soup ladle.

Poor Miss Minter could not tell how she felt until she saw her face. Even then she needed mama to tell her it was an emotion she had never "registered" before. It's fortunate the news didn't come while Mary Miles Minter was in the dark, for then she never would have known just how she did take it.

The death of loved human beings has been a most fertile source of artistic expression. The poetry, prose, music and drama of the world would suffer irreparably if they were deprived of their eulogistic pieces.

It remained for Miss Minter, however, to invent a new form of artistic eulogy--the frozen-horror movie face.

* * * * *

March 19, 1922

LOUISVILLE COURIER-JOURNAL

Bon Voyage, Mary!

Dear Mary Miles Minter, who made famous the frozen-horror face, has sailed for Honolulu, Hong Kong and other points east.

So far as can be learned, she has packed her emotions in her suitcase, fearing to leave them behind on her bureau. It's never safe to be separated long from one's emotions. While some of them are preserved by freezing, others are known to melt, disintegrate and decay.

With her emotions, Mary Miles has placed her mirror. There they are side by side, so that when Mary tries on an emotion, she can see its effect immediately and thus find out just how she is feeling.

For example, if she nestles in a quiet corner of the hurricane deck and

is subjected to the blandishments of the flirts that haunt the seven seas, she should have her emotional kit by the side of her steamer chair.

Otherwise, she'd be at a dead loss to react in the proper manner, being wholly ignorant of her feelings until she looks in the mirror.

In this connection, a theory regarding this charming damsel has been conceived. It will be remembered that when the news of the death of her friend, William Desmond Taylor, was brought to her, she not only registered perfect frozen horror, but was able to carry the expression to her mamma and have it interpreted.

It is said by close analysis of Mary Miles' makeup that the term "frozen" is not strictly accurate, but is merely used as a metaphor. It is said, further, in explanation of this gift of preserving an expression, that Mary Miles has no trouble at all in exercising it. Mary Miles, they say, is concrete from the neck upward and impressions upon such a skull last extraordinarily well.

A pleasant voyage to Mary Miles!

Untamed Hollywood

February 5, 1922

Skye T. Errier

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

The American Occupation of Movieland

Movieland, Southern California.--The marines have landed and have the situation well in hand. The devil dogs constitute the Army of Occupation of Movieland and will remain here until peace has been established and Movieland formally annexed to the United States. All bars have been closed and the marines are now raiding the peanut stands. No unpleasant incident occurred during the occupation except the burning of the beautiful library belonging to one of the native queens, consisting of two books, one by Nietzsche, the other by Freud, a telephone directory, and a copy of the Police Gazette.

A large number of the chiefs and natives assembled this afternoon, and I read to them the provisions of the Volstead act, which they had never heard of before. They cheered vociferously until they discovered that it also applied to cocktails. I also read them the constitution of the United States, and they thought it was very pretty. They seem to be a good natured people, willing to obey our laws as soon as they find out what they are. A large number of the inhabitants have expressed the wish to go to America, and have offered to take the oath of allegiance, but as most of them are being held as witnesses to something or other, their requests could not be complied with. Some of the inhabitants are demanding a plebiscite, but I do not think that the claims of America to sovereignty on the ground that the country formerly belonged to the United States will be forcibly disputed.

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February 16, 1922

S. Kye Terrier

BOSTON HERALD

The American marines, who are now in complete possession of Movieland, report no further casualties. A drastic curfew law has been put in force and all the inhabitants of Movieland are required to be in their houses by 7 o'clock in the evening. This drastic rule caused much excitement, as most of the residents of this strange country were not in the habit of getting up until that hour unless they were posing in a picture. The provost marshal issued an announcement today that caused much comment. "The night," said the provost marshal, "is the time for sleeping." The natives of Movieland said they never heard of such an outlandish thing. The provost marshal also declared that February, March and April must be regarded as closed months for grouse, quail, directors, scenario writers, black bear, tourists and game of all kind. Whether or not these will be permitted to be shot in the future rests on Will Hays, the new governor-general of Movieland, who has not yet arrived. Movieland is fast becoming Americanized, and its annexation can be looked for in the near future.

* * * * *

February 11, 1922

Arthur Baer

NEW YORK AMERICAN

Shooting Stars

State of California is going bankrupt trying our moving picture actors for murder.

They have started in to improve movies by shooting all movie actors.

If your wife gets celluloid bug and wants to go to California for film career, don't waste money on railroad ticket. Keep her at home and shoot her yourself.

Day in Hollywood opens up with close-up of jailhouse, cut-back to scene of crime and fade out of coroner's chariot.

Latest artillery practice in Los Angeles is great break for one star now in Mr. Jail's house. California has had so many cannon parties that State has run out of witnesses. Therefore, they've got to let him off so he can serve as foreman of jury in this latest and more modern assassination.

Old-time actors used to get flowers over footlights.

Enthusiasts used to follow Booth, Bernhardt, Maude Adams with handful of flowers.

Nowadays, friends of movie actors follow them with whole carriage full of blossoms.

They may get plenty of blooms, buds and bouquets, but they never smell 'em.

Hollywood doesn't take disarmament conference seriously.

Let's go back to pie throwing stage again. If we have choice of embalmer's or baker's wagon, we'll take pastry limousine.

Movie actors once roamed plains in countless numbers. But ruthless extermination will soon make 'em scarcer than moths on iceberg.

Good actors are getting scarce. If Hollywood stars must have their matinee scenarios written by Krupp's, why don't they shoot their understudies?

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February 16, 1922

NEW YORK POST

Hollywood's Wilds to be Explored

A voyage more hazardous, it is said, than the Traprock expedition to the South Seas will be started on Saturday, when the Sherwood-Connelly-Barton-Howard mission to the wilds of Hollywood sets sail from these shores on the steamship Ruth Alexander of the Admiral Line. The make-up of the expedition, it was announced today, would be Robert E. Sherwood, motion picture critic of Life, Marc Connelly, one of the two principal authors of "Dulcy"; Ralph Barton, the art-artist; and Sidney Howard the play-playwright.

Going to Havana and then through the Panama Canal, the party will cruise up the coast of California to a point due west of the Los Angeles movie colony, where they will disembark and, with the aid of native guides, proceed inland.

"We are fully aware of the risks we are taking," declared Chief Bob Sherwood of the expeditionary force today. "However, our minds are made up. We shall not return until we have found the answer to the much mooted question, 'What's all the shootin' for?' "

According to one report, bullet-proof suits will be distributed as the explorers near their destination.

"Among other things," added Chief Explorer Sherwood, "we are hopeful that our visit will be productive of a number of reforms. This is not merely the beginning of the See Hollywood First movement. If Hollywood is to be made safe for democracy it must get over its absurd idea of modesty, its chronic distaste of publicity. The inhabitants must come out in the open, give their names to the papers and not shrink like wild violet from the white light of the public gaze. We hope by our example to cure them. I trust I make myself clear."

The expedition will return to civilization in about six weeks.

* * * * *

February 17, 1922

Foster Ware

Game Laws for New Hollywood

According to news dispatches, one of the largest motion picture producers is about to found a new colony. For the good of the service, the following rules and regulations are proposed.

(1) No shooting shall be permitted during business hours.

(2) Persons contemplating acts of violence against leaders of the industry shall be required to serve due notice of their intentions, so that vacancies resulting therefrom may be filled with the least possible delay.

(3) Use of loaded firearms for professional purposes is strictly forbidden except by William S. Hart, Tom Mix and William Farnum.

(4) All stars shall consent to be frisked before and after attending social functions.

(5) No alibis shall be allowed within the reservation unless accompanied by at least one eyewitness.

(6) No murder shall be reported to the authorities until all those concerned have had opportunity to destroy incriminating evidence.

(7) Lights out at 8 p.m.

(8) After 8 o'clock all persons must be found in their homes, dead or alive.

(9) No star shall be permitted to have more than twenty-five nor less than twelve accredited suitors in any given season.

(10) No interview given to the press shall be considered valid unless preceded by the conventional "not guilty."

(11) Deaths from natural causes are forbidden within the reservation unless absolutely necessary.

Frank Mayo vs. The Press

February 8, 1922

CHICAGO HERALD-EXAMINER

Wants Colony Burned

(New York)--"Burn it up! The Hollywood film colony is a pernicious influence. Scatter it, abolish it--something ought to be done. Burn it up--I say."

Frank Mayo, screen and stage star and a resident of Hollywood as a member of the Universal Company, made this statement here today.

"If I express myself bitterly, I am expressing what every self-respecting actor in Hollywood feels," he said.

"The best thing that could happen to moving pictures would be to abolish the Hollywood colony.

"Why don't we actors who have respect for our art and ourselves get together and demand a 'clean up' of the undesirables? What good would that do? You forget that some of the biggest stars in the business are among the undesirables. They have been raised to positions for which they are not fitted. They receive enormous salaries. They haven't the brains or desire to improve themselves and they spend their money like drunken sailors. They make us all suffer. It isn't fair, and I, for one, resent it."

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February 9, 1922

LOS ANGELES HERALD

Hollywood Up In Arms At Frank Mayo

An avalanche of indignation followed today in the wake of the statement credited to Frank Mayo, film actor, in a New York dispatch yesterday, in which the Hollywood motion picture colony was severely criticized.

Publication of Mayo's interview brought instant protest. The actor's ears must have "burned" continually since yesterday if the superstition holds good, for all Hollywood "panned" him unmercifully. For the moment he was as big a subject for conversation as was the Taylor murder.

Mayo's unexpected attack on the Hollywood motion picture colony was described as "ravings" and "an example of the lengths to which some notoriety-seeking individuals will go to get their name in the paper."

Scores of picture celebrities and studio executives strongly condemn

Mayo's act. At every studio protests were heard.

Mayo recently figured in a sensational divorce suit.

As one prominent star put it, "Persons who live in glass houses should not throw stones."

* * * * *

February 16, 1922

Paul Smith, U.S.N.

OAKLAND TRIBUNE

(letter to the editor)

A Sailor's Protest

While reading a copy of your edition of February 7 we Gobs happened to notice the story of Mr. Frank Mayo, entitled "Burning--Hollywood--Scatter It." He used the expression his class spent their money "like a drunken sailor." We believe this to be a very poor way of comparison. Seems to be some mistake, or brainless judgment on his part. When, where did he get the phrase? We do not know his position during the war, but only as a movie man. But I take it that he was in no service, or he would give his title a second thought. I would suggest that Mr. Mayo and all other actors live on navy pay awhile and see how drunk they could get.

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February 11, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO CALL-POST

A sweeping denial of an interview credited to him and in which he was quoted in dispatches from New York as scathingly scoring the Hollywood film colony recommending that it be "wiped out" is contained in a telegram received today from Frank Mayo, motion picture star.

A storm of criticism followed in the wake of the reputed interview with Mayo. From various sources in Hollywood he was classed as "an actor seeking cheap notoriety." Several organizations, including well known film stars, were said to be contemplating action against him. Among these organizations are the Motion Picture Directors' Association, the American Society of Cinematographers, the Assistant Directors' Association and the Writers'

Guild.

Mayo, charging that he was misquoted in New York, wired today as follows:

"Have just seen what was sent to California papers purporting to come from me. I never saw such a distorted story in my life. It is true I talked to a reporter about my personal appearances in New York, said I did not live in Hollywood, but I thought it needed more amusements. Absolutely nothing more. Was thunderstruck and heart broken at way personal talk was used. I have never made any statement against anybody or any place in my life. Please make this denial as strong as possible. Hollywood suits me and I am coming back to California and my friends in the profession with the same feeling I always entertained."

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March 12, 1922

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Frank Mayo spent several hours in town last week on his way from coast to coast. He wasn't a bit happy. He says he was misquoted in a certain newspaper, and as a result the world's down on him.

He was quoted as saying that Hollywood should be cleaned up--or burned up--or something, WHICH, he says, he never asserted. There may have been wild parties, he admits, but he never was in any of 'em and never saw anything of the kind. But the picture people think he's done 'em dirt, and they haven't hesitated to let him know it.

Moreover, deplored poor Mr. Mayo, he got in bad with the navy, they having read that he had said the Hollywood folk spent their money "like drunken sailors."

"I've been writing lots of letters," Mr. Mayo said mournfully, "and I'm beginning to get myself squared."

This husky star has been in New York. Circumstances sound like maybe a little birdie told him he'd better hie him to the woods and keep real still for a long, long time!

Tall Tales #1: Walter Underwood

February 10, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

A man believed to be an important witness, if not an actual conspirator in the murder of William Desmond Taylor, is in secret custody of the police at Topeka, Kansas.

He admits that he was an intimate acquaintance of Edward F. Sands, fugitive valet-secretary to the slain motion picture director, and attended many orgies of women, liquor and "dope" in the Taylor bungalow.

Further admissions indicate that he was with Sands the night of the mysterious murder and that two days after it he embezzled more than \$1000 from the Pacific Electric Railroad in Los Angeles to effect the escape of the pair.

The suspect was taken off a Santa Fe train at Topeka, which left Los Angeles Monday evening.

He took his arrest calmly.

"Well, you've got me," he remarked to Sheriff Robert Miler, who boarded the train and grabbed him, "and you've got a big one."

Then he admitted his name was Walter Underwood and that he was employed by the Los Angeles interurban line until his departure.

"What made you depart?" he was asked.

"Well, I embezzled more than \$1000 and had to go," he said.

"But my father is worth \$300,000 and he will get me out of this scrape."

"What do you know about the Taylor murder?" asked Sheriff Miler.

"I knew Sands and Taylor well," he said. "I have been on many parties at the Taylor bungalow, where Mabel Normand and other actresses were present.

(Miss Normand, seen at her home here last night, denied ever knowing Underwood or ever having heard his name.)

"In fact, I was on a wild party with Sands a night or two--well, it was so wild and long drawn out I don't recall exactly when it ended."

"Would the party have been in progress the night of the murder?"

"Well--say, are you trying to hook me for that murder?" he suddenly exclaimed, and refused to talk any more.

The man admitted that he was acquainted with both William Desmond Taylor and Sands, and saw Taylor a week before his death.

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February 10, 1922

RICHMOND NEWS LEADER

"It was a woman who did it," Underwood said when questioned about the murder. "I know nothing about it, but it was jealousy that caused it."

* * * * *

February 11, 1922

TOPEKA CAPITAL

That the celebrated movie actresses whom he declares took part in the wild parties at the home of the murdered director never used their real names, but were known by nicknames, such as May, Kitty, Babe, or some other similar pet name, was the declaration of Underwood.

"The women I met at Taylor's house were never formally introduced to me as Miss Normand, or Miss Minter," Underwood declared.

"Then how did you meet them?" he was asked. "Didn't some one, a mutual acquaintance, introduce you?"

"No, we just went in, and the rest of the party were there, and during the evening I would hear someone call one of the actresses Kitty, or something like that. If I had occasion to talk to one I would apply my own pet name to her."

"Then how did you know that some girl whom you met at this fellow Taylor's house was really Miss Mabel Normand or Miss Mary Miles Minter?"

"Oh, I guess I know them when I see them," he replied. "I don't need to be told who anyone is around there."

"Aren't you just trying to kid the public and get a lot of fun out of this Taylor and Sands story?"

"No kidding, I really knew them. Both of them."

* * * * *

February 10, 1922

CHICAGO AMERICAN

(Topeka)--Undersheriff Carlson said, "Underwood knew both Sands and Taylor and he told me that, from what he knew of the latter, he suspects a woman committed the murder.

"Underwood said he belonged to one of the so-called 'Oriental' clubs of which Taylor was also a member. My prisoner informs me that he has attended parties at the club, and that he several times attended them with Taylor and others from the moving picture colony at Hollywood.

"Did he tell you anything of what went on at those parties?" the undersheriff was asked. "Is the man a drug addict?"

"No," the undersheriff replied, "Underwood is not a 'dope.' He told me he was present only at 'open house' parties of the club, and that the worst excesses he ever witnessed were those committed by men and women who became intoxicated, or who stupefied themselves with drugs, which, he said, they took without embarrassment in the presence of other guests.

"It is a question how much the man really knows. From his conversation he either knows something, or he is just seeking publicity."

* * * * *

February 10, 1922

LOS ANGELES RECORD

The theory that Walter Underwood knew Edward F. Sands or had any knowledge of the crime was flouted by W. T. Maddex, Underwood's step-father.

"The boy was a lover of notoriety," he said.

"I am certain that he never knew Sands or Taylor either. He would sometimes tell his mother in an off-hand way that he had met some of her friends or acquaintances on the street and it would later develop there was no truth in his story."

According to Maddex, Underwood was a lover of adventure.

Maddex admitted that authorities had made the right arrest in connection with the embezzlement charge.

"We have both told Walter above all things else to be honest," Maddex said seriously.

"I have many times heard his mother tell him that."

Maddex, although he has the utmost confidence and friendship of Pacific Electric officials, by virtue of the fact that he was formerly manager of the Redondo line, said he would make no move to soften his step-son's punishment.

"I had concluded that since Walter is 31 years old he is old enough to understand fully what he did. If he was let off this time, it might mean only a repetition of the offense."

* * * * *

February 11, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Walter Underwood frequently had recourse to certain little "pills" to quiet his shaking nerves while employed as an assistant cashier at the Pacific Electric Railway ticket office.

This was made known by friends and co-workers of Underwood yesterday.

* * * * *

February 12, 1922

TOPEKA CAPITAL

A continual examination of Underwood yesterday failed to throw any light on the Taylor murder mystery. It is doubtful, Sheriff Miler said, if Underwood really knew either Taylor or Sands, although he has insisted all along that he did. When asked point blank yesterday if he would know Taylor or Sands if they were in the room, Underwood just laughed and refused to admit or deny anything.

* * * * *

February 13, 1922

TOPEKA CAPITAL

Underwood Is a Fake, Local Officers Believe

That Walter Scott Underwood is telling his story of acquaintances with William Desmond Taylor and Edward F. Sands to win notoriety, is the belief of Sheriff Miler and other officers.

"I did not put any stock in his story after I caught him in a lie the night I took him from the train," Miler said. "After he had told me he had not been in his stepfather's home in the last three weeks, he told a story about his being taken to his stepfather's home in Taylor's car less than two weeks ago. When I called him on it, he told me I had listened too closely to his story. He quit talking about Sands and Taylor then."

Officers from Los Angeles probably will arrive today to take Underwood back to California.

* * * * *

February 28, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

(Los Angeles)--Underwood said Taylor lived in constant terror, apparently of unseen enemies who menaced him.

According to Underwood, he met Sands at Seventh and Broadway on the day following the death of Taylor.

"Well, I'm heading south. I probably won't see you again," Underwood says Sands told him.

"Where are you going?" Underwood says he asked.

"Probably Mexico--possibly South America," Sands replied, according to Underwood.

Underwood said:

"Some weeks previous to the murder I was sitting alone in a downtown cafe when Taylor and a party of friends entered and took the table next to mine. He was in a jovial mood, and within the next thirty minutes, observing that I was alone, invited me to join his group. I accepted.

"In the party were a number of women I recognized as having seen on the motion picture screen--women that were known the world over as actresses of the first degree. I will not give their names, because I do not wish to involve any of them in this unpleasant affair.

"These same women, however, I saw on numerous occasions when I was a guest at the Taylor bungalow on Alvarado. I have my own theory regarding the slaying and the connection of these people with it, but as to this angle I

have nothing to say."

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February 28, 1922

DENVER POST

(Los Angeles)--...Undersheriff Eugene Biscailuz, informed of these statements, interviewed Underwood in his cell in the city prison and dismissed him from consideration.

"He's having a lot of fun," Biscailuz said.

(to be continued)

NEXT ISSUE:

Wallace Smith: February 8, 1922

"The Humor of a Hollywood Murder" Part 5:

Doug and Mary Run the Gauntlet; The Fourth Estate; Psychic Visions

NOTES:

[1]Mabel Normand's letters (dubbed "Blessed Baby" letters because that was allegedly Taylor's term of endearment for her) vanished from Taylor's home until they were discovered in the toe of a boot. They were never published. Three of Mary Miles Minter's letters to Taylor were published, including the famous "I love you" letter.

[2]These were popular stage plays at that time.

[3]This is an obvious reference to the third published letter written by Mary Miles Minter.

[4]This was originally reported in the dispatches of Edward Doherty.

[5]"snickersnee"-- large curved sword, from The Mikado.

[6]See NEW YORK TIMES (February 6, 1922).

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.uno.edu/~drif/arbuckle/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>

For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *

* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *

* *

* Issue 8 -- August 1993 Editor: Bruce Long *

* All reprinted material is in the public domain *

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What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

Wallace Smith: February 8, 1922

The most sensational newspaper dispatches on the Taylor were coming from Wallace Smith of the CHICAGO AMERICAN, and Edward Doherty of the CHICAGO TRIBUNE. Doherty's articles were widely syndicated to newspapers throughout the country, but Smith's are more difficult to obtain. The following is a sample of his work, published a week after the murder.

* * * * *

February 8, 1922

Wallace Smith
CHICAGO AMERICAN

Secret service agents of the federal government, men famed as trailers of smugglers by land and sea, along the treacherous Mexican border and the Pacific coast, today plunged into the search for the slayer of William Desmond Taylor.

Their aid was enlisted not only in the hunt for Edward F. Sands, alias Edwin Fitz Strathmore, Taylor's former valet and secretary and army and navy deserter, but to follow the trail of the dope ring gangsters whose operations are seen behind the mystery of Taylor's murder.

As the secret service men began their search through the dens of the drug peddlers in Hollywood, Chief of Detectives David Adams and a squad of men hurried from headquarters on a secret tip that led them into the heart of the fashionable Wilshire district of Los Angeles.

It was stated that their informant, a woman, had supplied them with the tale of a recent dope party in this exclusive section of the city -- a mad revel in which several prominent actors and actresses took part and through which it was declared might develop a clew leading to Taylor's assassin.

Captain Adams made the statement today that the information in his possession positively links Sands with the slaying. "We have obtained secret information we believe virtually solves the murder," Capt. Adams said. "We are centering our efforts on the location of Sands. This information has not been made public, nor will it be, but it is positive in its character."

Their investigation of the Wilshire district orgy was but part of their campaign to drag into the light the secret, hidden lives of the country's greatest moving picture stars -- the lives they live behind the glamorous screen on which they strut their flickering, worshiped hour.

As the clear light of day pierced the fever fog of excess in which the set of Hollywood lives, there was a frantic scurrying for cover. The millions spent to build up the reputation of the idols of the screen rushed forward to protect the little golden gods and goddesses.

Dope parties hastily were cancelled -- one of them, an affair to which

all the leading drug users had been looking forward for weeks. Panic-stricken managers corralled their precious charges and begged them to behave --for just a little while at least.

It was known that the manager of at least one male star -- in Hollywood they prophesy fatalistically that this actor, one of the wildest of the dope users, will be the next to be involved in public scandal -- had secretly appointed a guard to care for his high-priced popular hero.

But chiefly the efforts of the operatives were turned on the career of one of the actresses mentioned time after time in the life and death of Taylor, the man of mystery.

Their investigation was rewarded with an amazing record of her escapades from practical jokes that would have shocked the notorious Dirty Club of London through a dozen scandalous love affairs to downright crimes.

All done by a woman, a victim of drugs, who is loved by millions for her innocent pranks on the screen.

It was not to be lightly considered how far the protection of the movie millions might go to shelter these pets of filmdom. Already ugly rumors run through Los Angeles of attempts made to bribe those most vigorous in pushing the investigation.

The police seemed to be about where they started a week ago, when the crime was done. They claimed to have found a clew in a handkerchief, initialed "S," said to have been found on the scene, and still spoke mysteriously about the peach-hued silk "nightie" that disappeared.

Detective Sergeant King of the district attorney's office provided the one police sensation by declaring that he would swear out a warrant later in the day, charging Edward F. Sands, alias Edwin Fits Strathmore, with the slaying.

At the same time it was predicted that the grand jury, with power to summon any actor or actress in range for information, would be assembled and bring an investigation of its own.

Mabel Normand, following her spectacular collapse yesterday at the side of Taylor's coffin, was reported improved today. It was reported, too, that

the spritely film star had recovered the "blessed baby" letters which had disappeared from the Taylor home.

Mary Miles Minter, also named as a dear friend of the slain director, was declared by her secretary to be under the care of a physician as a result of the shock. Her home was guarded by private detectives, who barred interviewers seeking an explanation of the "I love you -- I love you -- I love you" letter found in the Alvarado St. residence.

But the investigation turned principally upon the astounding career of the screen favorite who has found herself not entirely outside the pale of suspicion in the Taylor mystery.

She is a young woman -- except for the premature age that her use of morphine and her use of the world have given her -- who entered the world of films by the old-fashioned knockabout, slapstick comedy route. She came in to the clatter of comical back falls and the detonations of breakaway mallets bouncing off the heads of leading comedians. [1]

Her progress in refinement was devoted entirely to her work on the screen. In her private life, with all the abandon that marked her entire movie career, she took the easy, downhill course. Her excesses gave her notoriety even in the maddest of the Hollywood atmosphere.

Some of them were as unbelievable as they are unprintable, but once or twice she ran afoul of the police. The affairs were "hushed up" and the attractive star went on her career of playful fun-making for her admirers throughout the world.

She had been brought into the business and was made a star by a famous producer, one whose name is known today as perhaps no other for the quantity and quality of female pulchritude he has exposed before the cold, clicking eye of the movie camera.

There had been rumors of her marriage to a vaudeville manager. But the producer was generally looked upon as her one true love. She was madly jealous of him and to this day, despite her numerous affairs and her devotion to the drug that is killing her, is in love with him. [2]

She had him watched. She herself took on the role of private detective.

One night, when he had left her on the pretense of having a late conference, she followed him. He went to the home of one of his film beauties. She followed.

She came upon a gay scene. The producer, with a male friend and a pair of female friends, was indulging in a midnight rarebit with a gulp or two of beer. An extreme state of dishabille prevailed.

Into this scene burst a female fury, the young star. Reports differ as to the weapon she employed -- some say a knife, others a revolver -- but they agreed as to her purpose. She tried to kill the man who had turned from her.

His friend, who played drawing room society man parts, picked up a handy beer bottle and broke it over the young woman's head. She was hurried to the hospital and all over the country went the report of her collapse under the strain of work.

Later, no doubt, moved by this rare exhibition of affection, the producer permitted an ostensible reconciliation. Not long after, however, his fancy began to roam again. One evening he disengaged the young star's clinging arms, yawned and announced that he was going to his home to retire early.

Maybe there was something in his eye. Maybe she had seen him whispering at the studio that day to another of his famous beauties. She waited a while and went to the apartment of the whispering beauty in the same building as her own quarters.

The maid sought to bar her entrance. She knocked the maid down promptly and tore into the apartment bedroom to confront the man of her choice and the woman of his. [3]

There was a scream of rage from the star as she flung herself on the producer. Then the battle was on. They fought all over the place, knocking over lamps, tearing down pictures and ripping up rugs.

Finally the man, with a punishing wrestling hold, flung the star from the room. She was badly injured in the combat, and again went to the hospital. The public once more shook its head sympathetically at the efforts of the star to entertain it.

That was the last of the affair between the producer and the young woman he had starred. He went his way. She entered one of the wildest careers that ever seared the comet-swept firmament of Hollywood.

She continued her drug-inspired career. Friends seeing its ravages appearing on her face and showing in her drooping figure, sought to protect her. They persuaded her to undertake "the cure" and break away forever from the thrall of morphine.

Once more she went to the hospital. She was really ill. Her body was broken by the life of delirious excess. Slowly she fought her way back. The physicians had done what they could. But her friends reckoned without the insidious and sinister influence of the ring of dope peddlers, who don't so soon give up their human prey.

Often on these occasions she was seen with Taylor, her teacher in the simpler forms of culture.

Just a few nights before Taylor was killed the fading star and the director were observed at one of these dance affairs by this correspondent, who was engaged in amusing himself at the Los Angeles method of toddling.

There was a sag about the once brilliant, mischievous eyes of the star. There was a weary droop about the once pert and vivacious gestures. She was dressed in a simple frock. She swayed a little as she went toward her table and leaned on her escort's arm.

At a nearby table one of the finger-pointing, wise-cracking males of the moving picture colony winked meaningly.

"There goes So-and-so," he whispered. "She's full of the stuff again."

The male star mentioned as "the next one" is a man who is "just adored" by hundred of thousands of girls. He is the ideal matinee idol. His publicity agent dwells particularly on his happy married life and the fact that he is a father. But behind the screen in Hollywood they know him as "a holy terror" and shameless in his use of the drug. [4]

If he is not "the next one" then Hollywood looks for the newest scandal to come from another pair known to be clinging to each other like tired prize fighters, at least one of them afraid to let go for fear of the punch the

other might deliver coming out of the clinch.

She is known as one of the saccharine types of the screen, worshiped by women as well as men. For years her name was in the largest lights and her pictures were featured all over the world. One does not see her name or her pictures much any more. The "dope" has her, too. She is said to favor opium.

Early in her career this star became infatuated with the broad shouldered, genial youth who was her chauffeur. She decided to take him under her wing. She had wealth and power. He was "adopted" and set out to realize, with her backing, a hazy ambition to become a director and wear puttees and bark through a megaphone at actors. [5]

The ambition was realized. He became a director. Strangely enough, he became rather a good one, as directors go. To the lay observer and to many professional minds the director is a vastly overrated institution. At any rate, a director he became.

He began to get better. She began to hit the down grade. He seemed to weary of her. She sensed it. Finally she brought him over to the use of drugs. He could not stand opium. He took to the quicker use of morphine. Together they attended dope parties in Hollywood. They were looked upon as about as happy a couple as could be found in filmdom.

Then Hollywood heard of a fight in one of Los Angeles' leading hotels. The star, who was losing her glitter and her debonair young director were having a "show down." She was leading the argument before it was hushed by the house detective. She was leading it with an outpouring of vilification that would have reddened the ears of a Thames boatman.

"You came up with me," she screamed, "and you'll go down with me. I made you and you can't quit me now. If you do you'll have your name all over the headlines. Remember the Arbuckle case."

Since then the star and director have been seen together again at the dope parties. They have become reconciled for the present, at least. The woman -- she is still young -- spends most of the daylight hours in her hotel room.

So much for the present of the secret lives of the moving picture stars. The investigators found them of keen interest. Woven in them they could see not one possible motive but a score of them for the slaying of Taylor.

Detective Serg. King, in his declaration that he would swear out a warrant for the arrest of Sands, declared that in his estimation the murder mystery was solved -- or would be as soon as Sands had been arrested. He declared "corroborative evidence" showed that Sands could clear away the mystery in a few words.

The handkerchief with the initial "S" was supposed to have been at Taylor's side when the body was found. It was a man's handkerchief and soiled, it was said. The detective, for some reason or other, made no effort to confiscate the handkerchief for evidence, and it has since disappeared -- if it existed.

Miss Normand's collapse at the coffin of Taylor was a dramatic one. It came after the crowd outside had struggled for hours with the police to gain admission to the church or to view so some of the great stars of the screen who were expected to appear.

Many of them had spoken words of praise for the murdered director and had vowed their friendship. But few appeared and these retired to the background.

Miss Normand, dressed in black, with a white lace collar on her frock and accompanied by her maid and a woman friend, was escorted through the crowd by a detective. All through the services in St. Paul's Pro-Cathedral Church she sat in a forward pew near the casket.

She was swept backward in the swirl of the crowd toward the doorway following the services. In the vestibule of the church was the coffin, with its guard of Canadian soldiers. As Miss Normand and her attendants reached the coffin, the maid and the other woman grasped her arms as if to keep her from going any nearer.

The little actress strained against their retaining hold and almost dragged them to the side of the casket, where she might be able once more to behold the features of the man to whom she was once reported engaged.

For a moment she bent over the coffin. Then with a little moan, she collapsed and a minute later was sobbing hysterically. She was taken into another of the pews until she had recovered herself sufficiently to make her way to her motor.

Among those whose cards were found among the flowers were Ethel Daisy Taylor, daughter of the slain director; Charles Ray, Al Christie, Lila Lee, Thomas M. Ince, Mack Sennett, Antonio Moreno, Constance Talmadge, Charles Chaplin, Douglas MacLean, Betty Compson, Mary Miles Minter and Claire Windsor.

"The Humor of a Hollywood Murder", Part 5

Doug and Mary Run the Gauntlet

February 13, 1922

ALBUQUERQUE HERALD

Douglas Fairbanks and "Little Mary" [Pickford] passed through Albuquerque last evening on train No. 4 and spent half an hour taking exercise up and down the platform.

"Doug and Mary" denied they were headed east to avoid the scandal of the Taylor murder case--in fact they even professed great ignorance regarding the case and absolutely declined to discuss it in any way.

* * * * *

February 14, 1922

CHICAGO AMERICAN

(Chicago)--Mary smiled sweetly. "Please don't make us say anything horrid, will you?" she asked. [6]

* * * * *

February 15, 1922

NEW YORK NEWS

(Chicago)--"All this talk about Hollywood is a joke, anyway," Doug said. "Why, say, do you know there was a prominent minister and--oh, me--oh, my--a

prominent newspaper editor seen hiding around the Taylor house just before the murder? They're expected to be arrested at any minute. Strait stuff! This is the real inside story of Hollywood."

Doug winked.

February 15, 1922

NEW YORK POST

(New York)--"Too much has been said about Hollywood already," Mary said. "If I could do any good by talking about Hollywood, I would discuss it, but it would only be making the pot boil a little harder, and I really don't think it's worth while."

February 16, 1922

NEW YORK NEWS

Our hero and heroine having comfortably seated themselves on a divan in their suite, their guests [the press] were graciously invited to do likewise, which they did.

"Now, frankly," began one bold youth with horn-rimmed glasses, "what is your opinion of the Hollywood scandal?"

"Oh, dear!" murmured Mary, registering despair and rolling her eyes up to the ceiling.

"Lovely day outside," said Doug, executing a handspring on the carpet.

February 15, 1922

SYRACUSE POST-STANDARD

Movies May Quit America If It Isn't Nice To Actors

(Chicago)--American will lose its motion picture industry unless senseless criticism of its people stops.

This was the warning issued today by Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford in response to questions concerning Hollywood.

The real stars in Hollywood never heard of a dope ring, asserted the hero and heroine of the Fairbanks family, and both of them agreed on this

statement:

"Unless an intolerant public and press cease attaching to a manufacturing industry, such as the cinema, the stigma of narcotic smoke, scrambled domesticity, night time orgies, purple loves and freely distributed bank-notes, Paris, or perhaps the South Sea Islands, will be the future home of the camera setups.

"Motion pictures make up an industry in which money is worked for and not inherited. If the United States does not like us there are other countries that do.

"Paris was made famous by the same vicious reports which are being hurled against Hollywood. In the case of Paris, as in this, the revelers in nine cases out of ten were American or British visitors to the city.

"Real estate in Hollywood will take a leap."

* * * * *

February 16, 1922

SYRACUSE POST-STANDARD

The movies may quit America if it isn't nice to the actors, say Doug and Mary. We take that as a personal insult. Here we are trying to amuse the people, endeavoring to make them smile or laugh and along come these two stealing our stuff. They are butting in on our preserves and we object.

How on earth can we run a column supposed to be slightly humorous at times when we have such competition right on the first page of our own paper? We never laid any claims to the ability to produce shrieks of laughter, but we have tried faithfully until this blow. We have read Artemus Ward, Joe Miller, Mark Twain, Life, Main Street, Irv Cobb's stories, Ring Lardner, George Ade and a host of other humorists, but theirs are funeral orations compared with Mary's and Doug's remarks.

We don't want to play in your yard,

We don't love you any more;

You'll be sorry when we leave you,

To shoot our scenes on tropic shore.

We don't like the way you treat us,

We are angels, don't you see;
Just you watch how swell they'll greet us,
When we move to dear Paree.

When we recovered from hysterics after reading the effusion of the two, we thought that it was rather rough on the South Sea Islands to pick them for one of the possible destinations of the movies. Paris isn't so bad, because Paris might have a say in the matter, but the poor, little, defenseless South Sea Islands! What have they ever done to the movies!

We are thinking seriously of asking Doug and Mary to run the column some day. If they can keep up the pace they have set for rich and rare humor, it ought to be a humdinger from start to finish.

If the hegira takes place (that's a fancy word meaning getaway) "real estate in Hollywood will take a leap," says Mary and Doug. A leap for joy?

It's all right for movie people to come to the defense of movie people, but when they threaten to take their toys and go home, that's different. Why not pick China for the abode of future operations? Think how nice it would sound to be able to pressagent that some of the stars were receiving 6,000,000,000, 000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,001 yen a month for their work!

As we threatened, we will be forced to stop running this column unless we have less competition from Hollywood.

* * * * *

February 24, 1922

NASHVILLE BANNER

Douglas Fairbanks threatens to leave this country and make his home in Europe if people don't stop criticizing Hollywood and the movie industry. Chances are when he thinks of the sort of money they pay out over there his mind will undergo a change on the subject. [7]

* * * * *

February 20, 1922

HOUSTON POST

Douglas Fairbanks is threatening to go to Europe because of the

unmerited criticism of the film industry. We'd hate to see Doug go, for we like him. But we want him to understand this: If he does go, he will have to leave little Mary behind, for America will not give her up.

The Fourth Estate

February 16, 1922

KANSAS CITY TIMES

It must be freely admitted that the Los Angeles reporters are energetic enough in the Taylor murder case, whether the police are or not.

* * * * *

February 7, 1922

ARIZONA GAZETTE

Mountains and Molehills

California newspapers, and especially those of Los Angeles, are running wild over the recent shooting there, under mysterious circumstances, of a motion-picture director named W. D. Taylor. The columns of the Los Angeles dailies have literally reeked with sensationalism for several days, the first pages being given over, to a great extent, to the exploitation of this new morsel of criminal chronology. To say that this sort of stuff which the California papers are playing up is sickeningly nauseating to the average reader is putting it mildly. Why is such prominence given to this comparatively obscure killing? Certainly the dead man's position did not warrant it. It is safe to say that very few persons not connected with the motion-picture industry knew anything of this man Taylor or whatever his real name may have been. He may have been a good director. Probably he was. For that he deserves sufficient praise. So would a good ditch digger or a good carpenter or a good surveyor or any other man who achieved success in his particular line of endeavor. Buy why magnify his importance out of all proportion, merely for the sake of creating a sensation? Taylor was not a great man; not even a prominent man. His name meant nothing to the nation.

And yet, for the sake of yellow sensationalism, and possibly to cause reflections upon the motion-picture industry and those eminently worthy and respectable persons engaged therein, the newspapers are flaunting this case in the face of the world as the sensation of the age. They are making a mountain of muck out of a mere molehill. Faugh! It is sickening!

* * * * *

February 9, 1922

ALBANY POST

A Suggestion That Is In Order

During several days, the wires have been loaded with information about thus far futile activities of detectives who are "working on" the Taylor murder case at Hollywood. Names of film actresses and other personages of the movie world have been dragged in. Silly letters said to have been written by one of them have been quoted. Alleged clues have been exhibited. Long stories have been written about possibilities. Almost, one is inclined to suspect that the "news" has been produced by professional scenario writers whose specialty has been to manufacture stories for serial reels of the blood-and-thunder variety.

Manifestly the suggestion is in order that the output of words be checked, and not be permitted to flow again unless and until the murderer is caught.

* * * * *

February 17, 1922

John Smith

BUFFALO EXPRESS

At this distance it appears possible that, if the movie business is to retain its hold on the public, the actors and actorines must do one of two things:

(1)--Maintain a semblance of respectability, or

(2)--Become so bad that no newspaper will print anything about their goings on.

Cynics who have a good opinion of neither the movie colony nor the

newspapers may claim that neither course is possible.

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February 10, 1922

OAKLAND TRIBUNE

A Reporter at Hollywood

Wishing to solve this Southern mystery we have sent one of our most trusted sleuths to Hollywood with instruction to break away the film, film directors and huskies who surround the case and give us the facts. His first dispatch follows:

Sir:--I have arrived here disguised as a cowboy willing to accept a \$100,000 salary during the winter grazing season and, at once was given the entree to movieland. Except for twelve hundred reporters I am the only one who is, as you might say, on the ground floor. Frankly, I am without a theory. My training led me at first to suspect the butler but as he is not here to turn white and to run his fingers around his collar, I am not so sure. Men in one movie camp tell me the most likely suspects are in the others and the Los Angeles reporters have it that anybody is a suspect whose picture looks well on the front page. The recipe for writing a story is three parts dope, to one part bootleg. Stir well and add tobasco. It is a good recipe as it brings a new result each day. You may say for my readers that I am supplied with a number of disguises and an immense determination, that I am followed hourly by press agents and that whatever I say will be up to the accepted standard for reliability.

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February 11, 1922

CHICAGO POST

People are interested in movie stars because they know them by sight. So the latest crime in Hollywood movie circles has had an unusual drawing power as news. But for lack of progress in the detection of the criminal, certain Chicago papers have begun to vie with each other in the turning up of foulness and degeneracy, and in the brazen openness and cynicism with which they have forced on their decent readers all sorts of filthy gossip about

depravity and unnatural vice. None of it is fit to print.

It is getting hard to tell which are the most demoralized and demoralizing, the overpaid, underbalanced decadents who form a lunatic fringe of the movie world, or the cynical scandalmongers of the Chicago press.

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February 14, 1922

Joe Webb

AUSTIN AMERICAN

Perhaps the reason Movie Boss Will Hays wants to move the movie colony to the east is so that the New York reporters can be rushed to the scene without loss of time whenever a new scandal develops.

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February 23, 1922

Roy Moulton

ARIZONA CITIZEN

Solved, At Last, By Headline Writers

- "Taylor Was Shot by Holdup Man."
- "Jealous Rival Murdered Taylor."
- "Taylor Shot Protecting Normand."
- "Police Say Man Was Surely Murderer."
- "Police Sure Woman Did the Murder."
- "Prominent Movie Magnate Fired Shot."
- "Man in China Fired the Fatal Shot."
- "Prosecutor at Sea But Not Seasick."
- "Well-Known Comedian Surely the Guilty One."
- "Former Employee Was the Real Murderer."
- "Authorities Agree Actress Fired Shot."
- "Man Concealed in Desk Drawer Fired Shot."
- "Police Say Female Blackmailer Fired Shot."
- "Police Believe Male Blackmailer Guilty."
- "Murderer, a Film Actress, About to Confess."
- "Police Will Have Guilty Chauffeur by Night."

"Prominent Manicure Probably Did Murder."

"Lingerie Dealer Sought as the Murderer."

"Lady Dope Peddler Murdered Taylor."

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May 1922

PHOTOPLAY

During the investigation in the Taylor murder case, when each day the sensational newspapers would come out with fresh "clues" and scandals only to cast them aside the day following for new ones, a certain noted motion picture star was approached by reporters of a Los Angeles daily with an interesting proposition.

They wanted him to "disappear" over the Mexican border so that the paper might run a sensational story fixing the guilt temporarily upon him. Of course, they said, he could return immediately and be cleared by an alibi.

The idea behind the proposition was that the star would get a lot of free publicity and the newspaper would get a corking new yarn to excite the fans--and, consequently, sell the paper.

But they picked on the wrong star. The gentleman they chose--we will call him Mr. M. [8]--hurled the reporters out of the room. Another paper got wind of the stunt and attempted to interview Mr. M., but he refused on the ground that too much sensational stuff had been woven about the unfortunate tragedy.

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February 13, 1922

OAKLAND TRIBUNE

Our Correspondent

Hollywood.--There is nothing more promising than the clues they have here. In spite of reports to the contrary, I find all the police officers, detectives, strong-arm men and press agents most accommodating. They press clues upon me from all sides until the task that is left for me is draw the right one out of the pile. To set at rest some wild rumors, I made a personal investigation today. They do not deliver dope to the Hollywood back doors in

milk wagons. There are no pipe lines of booze in any of the bungalows to which I have been invited, and the bootleggers do not exactly fight for first privileges at the newcomer. They draw lots or shake dice like gentlemen. The longer I work on this case the more I am convinced that I am as good a detective as there is on the job. Perhaps I am better--for I know nothing to conceal.

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February 8, 1922

HOLLYWOOD NEWS

Hearst Circulation in Hollywood Should Be Zero

As has been generally expected, the Los Angeles Examiner has broken into print with another exhibition of vulgar language directed against the film colony of Hollywood in their follow-up of the William D. Taylor murder. Perhaps a reprint of one of the most obnoxious remarks might better serve the purpose of showing the folks of the movie colony just what is being said against them. Here is what the Examiner has to say anet motion-picture directors when speaking of certain night clothes found in William D. Taylor's bungalow:

"Taylor never wore those nighties, yet few nights passed that they were not worn, according to the police. Sands knew that Taylor was no better than any other film director in Los Angeles."

It is an outrage to Hollywood. Hearst papers should be choked off here until the local circulation is just what the little boy hit when he shot at the bird--nothing.

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February 14, 1922

NEW YORK HERALD

(Los Angeles)--District Attorney Woolwine today made a statement in which he deplored what he termed "faked and fraudulent interviews" on the case, and particularly one purporting to have come from him.

His statement follows:

"In the early edition of the Examiner for Monday morning there appeared

on the first page an interview purporting to come from me which was never in effect given.

"This interview never took place and there is not a word of it that I have ever authorized to be printed nor did I have the slightest intimation, directly or indirectly that it would be.

"There is not a sentence that contains my exact language about anything. It is composed of some things that I have uttered in substance. There are some half truths, many absolute falsehoods. Language purported to have been uttered by me is out of whole cloth and is viciously false.

"It is certainly an outrage for any newspaper to be guilty of such a faked and fraudulent interview.

"I am informed that this fake has been telegraphed all over the United States, which magnified its iniquity."

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February 26, 1922

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Lauding to the skies Hollywood and its motion-picture industry in his Los Angeles papers and reviling them in his Eastern sheets as a pesthole of iniquity and as the dregs and offscourings of the lowest type of social criminals, William Randolph Hearst has reached new heights of journalistic hypocrisy--for revenue only.

No praise is too fulsome or extravagant for Heart's LOS ANGELES EXAMINER to heap upon the film industry in Los Angeles, its home. No insults are too gross or baseless to hurl at that same Los Angeles industry in Hearst's CHICAGO AMERICAN and his dozen-odd other eastern papers. The damage done to Los Angeles by the circulation of these unfounded libels is past computation.

Nor has Hearst the excuse that his eastern reports are prepared at a distance by writers not in a position to get the facts. These reports have every one been written by Hearst employees in Los Angeles working out of the Los Angeles Examiner building and using the Hearst wires from this city. That they are recognized as unbridled fabrications is proven by the fact that the LOS ANGELES EXAMINER, which has to live here, has printed not a line of them.

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February 22, 1922

OAKLAND TRIBUNE

Our Hollywood correspondent seems to have fallen by the wayside. "I am lost in an empenetrable forest of grills and quizzes," he writes, "but I shall write myself out."

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February 9, 1922

DENVER POST

(Los Angeles)--Turning to their old friends, the police, reporters found the same reserve that the film colony has adopted. Asked why and how and when and where, the police answer was epitomized by one detective:

"We don't know anything. The newspapers are doing all the work on this case. Why bother us with questions?"

Tall Tales #2: Harry Fields

February 24, 1922

ARIZONA REPUBLICAN

Los Angeles Film Murder Was Plotted in Hop Joint

According to Detroit suspect Harry Fields the murder of Taylor was plotted in a "hop joint" at Venice, a beach suburb of Los Angeles.

Arrangements were completed shortly before noon Feb. 1, eight hours or more before Taylor was killed. At that time a woman named by Fields and Jennie Moore, and Wong Lee, a Chinese, and an American, Johnnie Clark sat in a dingy room in Venice and reviewed alleged plans for slaying Taylor because of their belief he was interfering with the drug traffic.

Fields said he was offered \$900 for driving the murder party to the Taylor apartments, but, he maintained, he was not invited to take an active part in the murder.

They stopped the car, according to the confession "nine doors south of

the Taylor bungalow on Alvarado street and on the other side of the street."

Fields was said to have declared, the woman, carrying an automatic pistol, of heavy calibre, the Chinese holding a .38 calibre break down pistol, and Clark carrying a blackjack, left the automobile and disappeared into the bungalow court.

Three minutes later, according to Fields, he heard the "muffled report" of a revolver and 30 seconds later the woman, the Chinese and Clark were back in the car urging Fields to go "away from here."

The remainder of the night was passed at the Venice "hop joint," as Fields described it, and the following day Wong Lee and Fields departed for the east by way of Seattle.

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February 24, 1922

HARTFORD COURANT

The wild stories bearing on the killing of Taylor cannot be expect to get any wilder than this about the taxi-driver who was paid the modest and naturally expected price of \$900 for carrying three murderers to do the deed. Presumably the normal charge was \$1,000 and 10 per cent off for cash reduced it to a discount rate of \$300 apiece.

The mere fact that the author of this startling scenario confesses himself a drug fiend does not seem to have reduced its probability in the minds of those who are "detecting" the criminals. There are skeptics who will pronounce this discovery a pipe dream, and, if it is not repudiated before this article is printed, that will be surprising. The explanations and the promises that have come out of Los Angeles in this case have been unique and ridiculous.

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February 26, 1922

DETROIT NEWS

(Detroit)--Angered at the skepticism with which authorities have received his confession to participation in the slaying of William Desmond Taylor, Harry M. Fields declared Saturday night that he had not yet begun to

tell the real story of the crime.

Fields, who is confined at the Wayne County Jail awaiting sentence after conviction for forgery, asserted that he wished now to reveal enough of the facts to convince the police that he possesses real knowledge of the plot against Taylor's life.

"I'm a low down jailbird," he said, "but I still have some shreds of self-respect left. I've a daughter 16 years old, and I'm determined that her father shall not be hanged. I shall tell the whole story of the Taylor assassination when I have been promised immunity from the death penalty. When I tell the real story it will involve many names prominent in filmdom."

Fields has confessed that he was the driver of the automobile which carried Taylor's assassins to the movie director's home at the time of the slaying.

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February 26, 1922

NEW YORK HERALD

(Detroit)--Fields says his motive for confessing was self-defense.

"I knew well enough one of us would spill it," he told the police. "I wanted to beat the others to it, knowing the one that confessed would stand the best chance to cheat the gallows. I have plenty of facts to support what I say, but I don't intend to drop them until I know I won't be hanged for my part in the mess."

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February 26, 1922

SAN DIEGO UNION

(Seattle)--Mrs. Lilly Fields, divorced wife of Harry M. Fields, held by Detroit police in connection with his declaration that he could clear up the Taylor murder case, said here tonight that Fields "always told wild stories about himself--and he's probably telling lies to the Detroit police."

Mrs. Fields, who is ill in a hospital here, said her former husband was a constant user of opium.

Mrs. Fields, who is soon to undergo an operation, declared that her

condition was due to Fields' neglect of her and their two children. She charged that he would contribute nothing to their support, and was continually getting into trouble. Mrs. Fields said she had secured his release from prison in British Columbia twice, and when reminded of the fact Fields told her, "I would be better off in prison than here."

Fields' former wife told of his bringing a number of his acquaintances to the house, and of their wanting to use narcotics there. When she objected, Mrs. Fields said, Fields broke up the furniture and left the house "a complete wreck."

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February 26, 1922
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

(Detroit)--Asserting he had previously given fictitious names in identifying the persons he claimed were implicated in the murder of William Desmond Taylor, Harry M. Fields told authorities today that a prominent motion picture actress, who was one of the quartet that planned the killing, preceded the other three participants to the Taylor home, with the understanding that she was to give the signal when the opportune moment arrived to do the shooting and escape.

When the car containing the Chinese, the white man, and woman who, he said, were the others implicated, arrived at Taylor's bungalow, Fields is said to have declared the actress emerged from the house and waved a bag of candy. The two men immediately left the automobile and a few seconds later Fields heard a shot. The men stepped from a window of the house and reentered the car. Meanwhile the actress who had given the signal disappeared.

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February 27, 1922
INDIANAPOLIS NEWS

That fellow under arrest in Detroit, and who claims to know so much about the Taylor murder, has about reached the point where his imagination must be paid for overtime, or else it will strike.

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March 2, 1922

NASHVILLE BANNER

A Detroit man confessed to complicity in the murder of Taylor, the Hollywood movie director, but he has such a reputation as a liar that nobody will believe him.

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February 27, 1922

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Harry M. Fields, the man under arrest in Detroit and exploited in the last few days as one of the slayers of Taylor, yesterday took his place in the "confession hall of defame." Fields was finally eliminated by dispatches from Indianapolis stating that Guy Broughton, Federal narcotic agent there, arrested Fields in Buffalo, N.Y., February 2, the day after Taylor was killed, and turned him over to the Detroit police. Fields was taken into custody on a drug-peddling charge. The Federal officers expressed an opinion that Fields indulged in a little too much of his own merchandise.

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March 1, 1922

DETROIT NEWS

Harry M. Fields, the opium smoker who named himself an accomplice in the slaying of William Desmond Taylor and who adorned the story of the Los Angeles shooting with a Chinese tong fighter, a paper bag of candy, a \$1,000 bank note, a prominent picture actress, and a pearl-handled revolver, will be reduced from the notorious place he claimed as driver of the death car to the ignominy of a penal cell at Jackson Prison.

With his colorful story fading like a puff of drugged smoke from his own pipe, Fields came before Judge William M. Heston in Recorder's Court Tuesday and was sentenced to serve for from three to 10 years for obtaining money under false pretenses. This charge, to which the drug addict had pleaded guilty before he made his "revelations" of the tragedy in Los Angeles, was the result of a series of worthless checks which he passed on Detroit department stores and restaurants early in 1921.

Almost coincident with the disposition of Fields' case, disclosures were made by his cell-mates at the County Jail which reveal that he had a motive for his story which make it more than the un-premeditated figment of a drug-tortured mind. Fields hoped his narrative would take him to Los Angeles and free him from the charge here, his fellow prisoners say.

He expected the story would bring him a trip to California. He declared that once in Los Angeles he would be immediately able to establish that he knew nothing at all of the Taylor mystery and that he would then be free.

When his description of the ride to Taylor's home first appeared in the newspapers, Fields became greatly excited, his fellow-prisoners say. He ran back and forth in the cell block, holding the papers high and shouting that he would certainly go to Los Angeles and escape the waiting sentence here. When Judge Heston ordered him to Jackson Tuesday, Fields paled and he turned and walked slowly to the court cell without speaking.

Psychic Visions

February 11, 1922

NEW YORK NEWS

Girl Psychic Says Sins Will Destroy Hollywood

Destruction of Los Angeles within the next five years "for sins of Hollywood," was predicted today by Miss Eugene Dennis, seventeen-year-old Atchison, Kan., girl psychic wonder.

Miss Dennis, whose psychic powers are being investigated by David P. Abbott for the American Society of Psychic Research, said a catastrophe--probably an earthquake--would "level the city."

"It will be a greater catastrophe than the San Francisco earthquake and fire," Miss Dennis said. "Los Angeles has had many warnings. Recent small earth tremors should awaken the city to its coming doom."

Miss Dennis believes William D. Taylor was murdered by a medium sized brunette woman, "no longer young but pretty."

* * * * *

February 28, 1922

LOS ANGELES HERALD

Mayor Cryer was placidly cutting open his mail this morning when he came to an envelope dated from Omaha, Nebraska. He was somewhat nonplussed when he read the following letter:

"The report published in certain papers throughout the country stating that I have predicted the destruction of Los Angeles, is absolutely false.

"I have never mentioned anything of the kind. I do not predict world events with which I am not in personal contact."

After making this modest assertion denying that she has made any evil predictions concerning Los Angeles, she signs herself as Eugene Dennis, "known as the 'Wonder Girl.' "

And to prove that she is the one and only "wonder girl" she attached a statement from David P. Abbott, who says that he is "the gentleman conducting the investigation of Miss Dennis for the purpose of making a report to the American Psychical Institute and Laboratory of New York City."

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February 6, 1922

CLEVELAND PRESS

"You can't pull the trigger. You can't even hold the revolver."

Sure enough. The trigger remained unpressed; the weapon fell from the unnerved grasp of Hardmuth, the lawyer.

The scene is from "The Witching Hour"--a study in the realm of hypnotism and inherited insanity.

William Desmond Taylor directed the movieized production of "The Witching Hour." An article descriptive of Taylor in action at the time told how he himself went thru the scene, first putting himself in the place of the man with the pistol, than in the place of the one at whom the pistol was pointed.

But when William Desmond Taylor dealt with the realities of death at the hands of an assassin in his Los Angeles home with witching hour was an hour

of actual tragedy, instead of an hour of tragedy averted by the power of mental suggestion.

That mental suggestion, so strongly featured in the drama which helped make Taylor famous as a director, did play a part in the last evening of his life is shown by what he said to Mabel Normand:

"I have the strangest and most ghastly feeling that something is going to happen to me." [9]

In "The Witching Hour" mental suggestion is worked out the point that one man sits in his room at home and influences the verdict of a juror in the courtroom, blocks away.

Conceding that mental suggestion is as powerful a force as it is made out to be in the play, and that the person who killed Taylor was enough of a master of mental suggestion to notify him by that process of the impending doom, that person then will possess enough ability as a psychic to influence the very jury that tries him--if he's caught.

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February 9, 1922

Carl Bronson

LOS ANGELES HERALD

Psychics Seek Solution of Murder

While police, sheriff's deputies and district attorney's detectives are following every earthly clue in the endeavor to track down the mysterious person who murdered William D. Taylor in his Alvarado street apartment, the psychical research societies and the spiritualistic devotees of Los Angeles are seeking through the invisible lanes of the supernatural to establish communication with the slain man on the "other side."

Friends of Mr. Taylor say that he was a devout believer in the ability of spirits of the departed to manifest themselves to those still occupying their earthly bodies.

"When I go into the great adventure," he is quoted as having said, "I will use every effort that is possible on the 'other side' to get back into communication with those remaining on earth," and it is with the belief that

Taylor's spirit will retain the power to carry out this promise that the psychics and spiritualists of Los Angeles are centralizing their efforts upon the attempt to get into communication with him.

These devotees of the occult firmly believe that it is possible for this to be done and they hold it would prove a tremendous proof of the truth of their beliefs if through spirit means a solution of the baffling death mystery could be worked out.

Thus far, however, they freely admit that nothing definite has been obtained from their concerted efforts.

This difficulty is being explained away by the psychics by the statement that in cases of sudden death, such as that of Mr. Taylor, the resultant mental shock and confusion of the instant is liable to last some little time after the death of the body and the spirit is very apt to linger around the old home, trying to adjust itself to the more familiar physical surroundings.

According to their beliefs there is a very definite reason why word is not easily obtained from the unseen when related to the commission of a crime, and that is that as such information is invariably subject to the laws of destiny, not fate.

According to this law, they say, the whole tape of experience must unravel itself in its own sequence, just as the flower exposes its true nature in its complete unfolding.

The fundamental laws upon which these psychics say that they will base their efforts for communication are exactly the same as those which govern the underlying principle of wireless telegraphy.

Some of the most noted psychics of the city have expressed the keenest interest in the effort and will try to secure what they term "dependable communications" from the deceased motion picture director through one of their centers and from some one of the spiritual planes.

Authorities claim that the conditions for the success of such a communication are more favorable now than ever before, since a certain cycle which has passed seems to have materially thinned the intervening veil.

Many will await with interest the outcome of this widely organized

effort.

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February 16, 1922

BUFFALO NEWS

Would End All Mystery

How much of the report that efforts will be made to get into communication with William Desmond Taylor in the spirit is based on fact, or how much of it exists only the imagination of the host of special writers who have descended on Hollywood, remains to be seen. Much of an imaginative, or fictional, nature has been coming from the Pacific coast since the moving picture colony again took up the public attention.

There are many sincere and intelligent people who believe that it is possible to communicate with the departed of this world. Few of these, however, will be inclined to regard it as ethical to use psychic powers in police work. Detectives' tasks would be made easy were it possible to penetrate the fourth dimension and call back the spirit of a murdered man to point out his slayer.

The report is interesting, even if not true, or even if nothing comes of it of benefit to the cause of psychic research or to the authorities in the quest of the murderer of the picture director.

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February 11, 1922

LOS ANGELES RECORD

An assassin hired by a motion picture leader, member of an alleged "dope ring," killed William Desmond Taylor, in the opinion of Ruth Wing Taylor, wife of Ted Taylor, the dead director's publicity agent.

Psychics have aided her in reaching her theory, Mrs. Taylor, who before her marriage was a screen actress, said. She explained:

"Since Mr. Taylor was killed, two persons of the highest standing in the study of the occult have come to me, saying that they believe I held the key to the murder.

"Things have come to me, one by one, that have convinced me that Mr.

Taylor was slain by a hired assassin, paid by a certain noted picture leader, whose money, I believe, has been able to purchase a quieting of suspicion and immunity from investigation.

"It is true the authorities have conducted a superficial investigation into his movements, but this psychic power within me tells me that he is the one responsible. The only woman with whom he has been really in love for several years was friendly toward Taylor and I believe he conceived this plan to rid himself of Taylor, whom he believed his rival for the woman's affections but who actually was interested in her only from a more or less intellectual standpoint." [10]

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February 13, 1922
LOS ANGELES RECORD

Beg Pardon

Ruth Wing Taylor today asked that newspapers retract the "psychic" explanation of the slaying of William Desmond Taylor, in which she was quoted as receiving a "key" to the solution from occult students. THE RECORD wishes to explain to its readers that the story came from indirect sources, and sincerely regrets its publication.

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February 15, 1922
OAKLAND TRIBUNE

Taylor Came to Me, Medium Says

(Oakland)--Complete details of her "communication from beyond," which, she says enabled her to learn the identity of the slayer of William Desmond Taylor, were made public today by Mrs. Edith C. Jones, a medium.

Mrs. Jones declared that Taylor was shot accidentally by a 4-year-old boy, the child of a noted film actress, who has been mentioned several times in connection with the case.

"I am able to tell these things," Mrs. Jones said today, "because I am often allowed to look into the great beyond--into the world behind the veil, so the speak. I can communicate with the departed, and William Desmond Taylor

came to me one night and I was shown how he was killed. He was not happy and could not rest because he knew that, while his death was accidental, someone might at any time be arrested for his murder.

"The shadow of this thing is also hanging over the head of that innocent little boy, and that is making Mr. Taylor sad. His spirit cannot rest."

Then pulling the shades in order to shut out as much light as possible from her sitting room, the medium told how "a communication from beyond made me acquainted with the facts" of the Los Angeles mystery.

"It was on last Friday night," she said. "The rain was pouring down and I was sitting in here. Suddenly everything became quiet and I knew I was to hear from someone outside--by that I mean from someone who has departed.

"In the window I could see the face of William Desmond Taylor. He seemed to be unhappy for fear that justice was not being done, and his lips seemed to say 'Tell the world the truth.' Then the face disappeared.

"Immediately it was replaced by one of a 4-year-old boy. The boy held a pistol in his hand as though he was playing and said: 'I will shoot you.' Then I heard a report and the face disappeared.

"Next voices from departed spirits began telling me all the details. This little boy came in to play with Mr. Taylor, who liked children, and was fooling with the pistol. He shot him while Mr. Taylor was sitting at a desk with his back turned.

"I know who this boy is and I will tell unless his mother comes out first. His mother is a famous moving picture actress." [11]

Mrs. Jones said that the next morning, Saturday, she wrote a letter to the authorities in Los Angeles, "Fully explaining the mystery."

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February 13, 1922
CHICAGO HERALD-EXAMINER

Tips Flood Woolwine

Hundreds of anonymous tips bearing on the Taylor case are being received by District Attorney Woolwine from all parts of the country by mail, telephone and telegraph.

Many appear absurd, but each is checked.

Some of the tipsters go to great length to outline their theories. One letter, in a feminine hand, read: "I dreamt last night Mr. Taylor was killed by a fair-haired woman with a hooked nose. Find that woman and you have the murderer."

Another from a woman: "Why don't you photograph the eyeballs of Taylor? They always mirror the image of the last thing a person sees before death?"

"Thank you, madam," replied Mr. Woolwine. "We'll consider such a thing."

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February 21, 1922

CHARLESTON GAZETTE

Someone now says they dreamed that William Desmond Taylor was murdered by a "blonde woman with a hook nose." We know of such a woman, but she was never in Hollywood.

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February 23, 1922

LOS ANGELES HERALD

Believers in spiritual communication, delvers into the occult, and those who strive to penetrate into the realm of the unseen will be thrilled by an announcement received from Boston today that the victim of the mysterious film murder has been in verbal contact with an earthly human and that some of the purported conversation centered on the mysterious slayer.

The announcement came to Los Angeles in a remarkable letter. News of the efforts of local psychics to communicate with Taylor reached a woman in Boston, and she, in her letter, states that previous to her receipt of this information she had conversed with the director's spirit.

This Boston medium, who claims to discourse with spirits without the aid of the familiar "trance" says:

"I was reared by parents of spiritualistic tendencies, so I am a natural believer in those things spiritual. I get in touch with spirits that have passed on easily, without trances.

"I have already 'had touch' with this man Taylor or Tanner. I asked him

which named he preferred and he answered, 'Never mind, dear lady.'

"Then I asked him, 'Who did the killing? Do you know?' He answered, 'Of course I know. But I will not tell. Perhaps I am much to blame.'

"I asked him why he came to me and the answer was: 'I seek only rest and peace. I find it near a stranger.'

"I asked him, 'Can you show yourself to me?' and he answered, 'No, for I am naked. I am repenting.'

"I inquired if there were other souls who were not naked and he answered that some come wrapped in a glory of light as a garment. 'But I have no garment.'

" 'Why not go to those of shining aura?' I inquired and the answer was, 'Not now, presently. O, let me live awhile yet with those that walk in the flesh.' "

Local psychics are communicating further with the Boston woman, with a view to possible further alleged manifestations of Taylor's spirit.

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February 18, 1922

Leo Marsh

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

(New York)--While Hollywood and its environs are having considerable trouble solving their recent murder murder mystery, Master Voros goes merrily on his mind-reading way down at the New Amsterdam Roof, and the management is seriously--so it asserts--considering a plan to turn him loose on the Taylor case.

It appears Voros can read any one's mind by looking at the back of his neck, and he even solves make-believe murder mysteries in the same way when two or three members of the audience get their heads together and frame such a circumstance.

If the young man can do this when there hasn't been any killing at all, reasons the management, how much more easily will it be for him to unearth the culprit when there has actually been a crime committed.

* * * * *

October 4, 1922
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Spirit Has Real Dope on Killing

The murderer of William Desmond Taylor, motion-picture director slain here last February, had better leave the country or confess, for the spirit world is all riled up, and certain spirits intend to give the police the real dope if the guilty party does not make a clean breast of things.

Yesterday afternoon an unknown medium telephoned to the office of Private Detective Nick Harris, declared that Taylor's murderer was a woman, the mother of a girl whom Taylor had wronged, and that the spirits were determined to have the mystery cleared up. Harris himself vouches for the authenticity of the telephone call, as do three police detectives, who were in his office at the time.

The voice over the telephone said, in part:

"I decided last night to submit to spirit land and received this message:

"That William Desmond Taylor was not murdered by a man but that he was shot by a woman disguised as a man and who is prominently known in Los Angeles. She has a daughter. The daughter, she believed, had been wronged by Taylor. [12]

"The message further stated the spirits would not divulge the identity of the mother for a certain period of time, but would give the guilty one an opportunity to go before the authorities and make her confession and her plea for self-preservation of her child's honor, and that no jury would convict her of this crime after hearing her story.

"The voice of the spirit stated that if this warning is disregarded, then the mother would be placed at the mercy of man-made laws, that her name would be given to the world through this medium."

* * * * *

August 1923
PHOTOPLAY

Ghost stories are rare these days, but a real ghost story has caused a

lot of inconvenience to Douglas MacLean and his charming young wife. In fact, 'tis said, this ghost story caused them to rush their plans for building and leave their Los Angeles home for the unhaunted precincts of Beverly Hills.

Mr. and Mrs. MacLean occupied an adjoining court-bungalow to that of William D. Taylor, who was mysteriously murdered. Recently, Mrs. MacLean began losing her colored servants. First one and then another would leave, without apparent cause. Finally, it was discovered that all of them claimed that at exactly the hour of Taylor's death every evening, they saw a ghost hovering--a white and appealing ghost,--about the Taylor bungalow, and that finally it would drift to the direction of the MacLean household. Douglas did his best to locate the spook, but without success, so the MacLeans moved.

(to be continued)

NEXT ISSUE:

Mary Miles Minter vs. American Film Co.

"The Humor of a Hollywood Murder" Part 6:

Evil Hollywood, Hollywood Treads Softly, Editorial Contemplations

NOTES:

[1]Obviously Smith is referring to Mabel Normand.

[2]Mack Sennett, the producer of her most popular films.

[3]The other woman was actress Mae Busch. This confrontation took place in September 1915.

[4]Clearly a reference to Wallace Reid, whose drug addiction would cause his death within a year.

[5]The actress is Blanche Sweet, the director is Marshall Neilan.

[6]Undoubtedly a reference to what had happened to actor Frank Mayo.

[7]Germany, in particular, was experiencing tremendous inflation at this time.

[8]Probably, Antonio Moreno.

[9]Mabel Normand subsequently denied Taylor had made this statement.

[10]This item appears to be directed at Mack Sennett.

[11]This item appears to be directed at Claire Windsor.

[12]This item is directed at Charlotte Shelby and was actually planted by Detective Ed King. See "William Desmond Taylor: A Dossier" (Scarecrow, 1991), pp. 286-287.

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.uno.edu/~drif/arbuckle/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>

For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 9 -- September 1993 Editor: Bruce Long *
* All reprinted material is in the public domain *

CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE:

Mary Miles Minter vs. American Film Co.

"The Humor of a Hollywood Murder" Part 6:

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What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

Mary Miles Minter was one of the central personalities in the Taylor case. The press details of her 1920 legal battle with the American Film Company give some interesting insights into her personality and the atmosphere of the era.

* * * * *

May 18, 1920

LOS ANGELES HERALD

Trial of the breach of contract suit of Mary Miles Minter, asking \$4125 alleged to be due her in back pay and expenses, and the counter-suit of the American Film Co. demanding \$102,523 damages claimed to have been suffered

through her failure to appear in a projected picture, was scheduled to begin before United States Judge Trippet today.

Involving many ramifications, among them the question of the film star's exact age, the trial, which is to be before a jury in the federal court, is expected to reveal many interesting sidelights on the financing of moving picture stars and productions.

The complaint in the suit sets forth among other things that Mary Miles Minter's real name is Juliet Reilly and that her mother's name is Mrs. Pearl Miles Reilly.

According to the allegations of the suit brought by the star, under the terms of a contract with the American Film Co. she was to receive \$2250 a week for a period of two years, but on various occasions received but \$1125.

It was for the payment of the alleged withheld salary that Miss Minter has brought suit. In justification of her claims it is set forth in the star's complaint that the company did not provide directors suited to her abilities and that she was compelled to work day and night on location in violation of the eight-hour law.

In the counter-suit brought by Attorney H. W. Bodkin for the American Film Co., it is claimed that the company suffered a loss of \$100,000 in prospective profits from a projected picture starring Miss Minter. In addition, the company claims that it had expended some \$2522 in purchasing a scenario, hiring actors and other incidentals to the making of a picture.

The failure of make this picture, it is related in the complaint, was solely due to the fact that Miss Minter refused to work during the last two months of the period covered in her contract.

Previous to this time, the cross-complaint states, Miss Minter would not work regularly, sometimes failing to appear more than two days out of the week.

The question of the age of the little star is due to come up in connection with the voidability of the contract made with the company. At the time the contract was made in April, 1917, it is said by Miss Minter that she was less than 18 years old.

That the burden of proving her age will rest with Miss Minter was the contention of the attorneys for the company.

* * * * *

May 19, 1920

LOS ANGELES HERALD

More than a hundred celebrities and near celebrities of filmdom thronged United States Judge Trippet's court today when the breach of contract suit of Mary Miles Minter against the American Film Co. actually went on trial.

A jury composed entirely of men had been selected to hear the evidence in the case, in which it is claimed by the screen star that the company owes her in the neighborhood of \$5000 for back pay and expenses.

Mrs. Pearl Miles Selby [sic], mother of Miss Minter, was the first witness called to the stand to testify today.

Asked concerning the reason for her daughter's failure to appear for work on various occasions set forth by the company, Mrs. Selby [sic] declared that in nearly every case it was due to a toothache.

* * * * *

May 20, 1920

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

The American Film Company deducted \$187.50 for a twenty minute period in which Mary Miles Minter curled her shampooed hair, according to Mrs. Pearl Miles Reilly, her mother, who testified yesterday on behalf of her daughter.

Attorneys W. J. Ford and H. G. Bodkin, representing the defendant company, claim that Mary had too much "temperament" and ignored the directions of the general manager which required all actresses, including stars, to be on duty as early as 9 a.m. They have subpoenaed Margaret Shelby, Miss Minter's sister, to testify today.

* * * * *

May 20, 1920

LOS ANGELES HERALD

First hand details of how a toothache affects a screen star's "temperament" were given by Mary Miles Minter in the trial of her breach of

contract suit against the American Film Co. in United States Judge Trippet's court today.

There was also testimony given by Miss Minter on temperament and its place in motion picture work. That the manager of the American Film Co. does not agree with Miss Minter's views was a deduction to be drawn from her testimony.

Miss Minter described a scene outside the scenario of the picture she was making between herself and Mr. Neil when she was late on the "set" one day because of trouble with a tooth.

On this occasion the witness testified she had not slept the night before and felt a "perfect fright."

"Can you describe Mr. Neil's manner when you came on the set?" Miss Minter was asked.

"I don't like to do that," she demurred.

"Well, just tell how he looked?" her attorney urged.

"Oh! He made me so nervous. He looked at me just as if I were a criminal. I felt like screaming," Miss Minter declared.

Then it was that Mr. Neil, according to Miss Minter, said that this "temperament business is all a joke." And furthermore declared that he didn't believe that the star had any more toothaches than he had.

Finally, the witness said, in order to please the manager she asked her director to take a few scenes. She said that all the time they were taking these scenes Mr. Neil stood on the "set" in a "threatening attitude."

During a conversation between herself and Mr. Neil while on the "set" that day Miss Minter testified the manager said to her in dramatic tones:

"No work, no pay." Her mother heard this remark the star testified and answered it, "All right, no pay, no work."

"What effect did Mr. Neil's presence have on your ability to work?" the star was asked.

"Well, it got to be so that when I looked at him that I just thought I couldn't stand it."

During her testimony, Miss Minter referred frequently to her director as

"Lloyd." Judge Trippet finally asked Miss Minter to whom she referred as "Lloyd."

"Why Mr. Ingraham," responded the witness.

"Do you usually refer to people by their first names on the "set"? she was asked.

"Oh, yes! Everybody calls everybody by their first name," Miss Minter declared.

Further reference was made by Miss Minter to her tooth at another point in her testimony. She declared that owing to the fact that she was unable to go regularly to the dentist the tooth broke off.

"The doctor was absolutely amazed," Miss Minter declared, "that anyone would take the responsibility of endangering her health."

Miss Minter then told the jury that owing to the fact that the tooth broke off she had to have a "false gold thing" put in its place.

* * * * *

May 21, 1920

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

...Miss Minter, who is represented by Attorney E. A. Meserve, testified the director was just as temperamental as she was.

"What do you mean by temperament?" asked Attorney Joe Ford, representing the American Film Company.

"If you call the arguments growing out of daily associations, temperament, then I suppose I had temperament," said Miss Minter.

She also tackled R. R. Neils, general manager of the American Film Company. She said he was very domineering and impressed his dignity by such orders as the one he issued to stars and others to be at work at 9 a.m.

A good part of the day was taken up in explaining the work on some pictures. Miss Minter stated she had been delayed on occasions by improper instructions to her, and by her desire to make up properly and in the most artistic fashion. She also said her absence on certain days with the company was due to a toothache, but that for a whole week she suffered rather than ask Mr. Neils for permission to leave.

Defense Attorneys Ford and Bodkin made efforts to establish whether Miss Minter laughed in the camera in a picture purposely to spoil it because she had been called to work early. They called Allan Forrest, an actor, to testify regarding the incident, but he stated he did not remember. Miss Minter denied she laughed in the camera to spoil the picture.

* * * * *

May 21, 1920

LOS ANGELES HERALD

...Miss Minter admitted that on many occasions during her work with the American Film Co. at Santa Barbara she went home at night to cry herself to sleep.

The crying episode was revealed when her attorney asked what effect the friction between herself and R. R. Neils had on her.

"Many, many times I went home, threw myself on the bed and cried myself to sleep," Miss Minter testified.

"Well, do you ordinarily cry easily?" she was asked.

"No, I'm not the crying sort," answered the witness. I don't like people who cry," she added.

Then Miss Minter was questioned concerning a checker game episode in which the members of her company were the players.

According to the story told in court by Miss Minter, the checker game was in progress during an interval in the filming of the picture.

The witness said she was suddenly startled by a "bing" on the back of her chair. Then she said she heard Mr. Neils say:

"Miss Minter, I command you to stop playing checkers." At this point the witness declared she screamed she was so nervous.

The witness was then asked if it was the custom for actors to play checkers on the "set" when they were not engaged before the camera.

"Oh, yes," answered Miss Minter, "it is quite the custom for them to play little games between times.

"Sometimes the boys shoot craps and the girls did embroidery or read."

Another incident described as being one of the causes of her troubles

with Mr. Neils, the manager of the American Film Co., was the filming of a scene under too many lights.

On one occasion Miss Minter testified that there were two or three times as many lights used as were necessary and that she was forced to rehearse before them, which she declared is contrary to the usual custom.

That night the witness stated she went home completely blinded. During the night she testified she awoke and thought hat her eyeballs were being burned out. The entire family had to get up and care for her, Miss Minter declared.

Before leaving the stand today Miss Minter was questioned by Judge Tripped as to whether she stopped working for the American Film Co. because she had been offered another contract with another company. Miss Minter declared that she did not have another contract in view at that time.

* * * * *

May 22, 1920

LOS ANGELES EXPRESS

...Dr. Nathaniel F. Hirtz, dentist, called at the request of Miss Minter, was the only witness called during the morning session, and the most minute details of dental work, past, present and possible future, were disclosed in questions asked by Attorney Meserve, representing the star, and Attorney Ford, who is conducting the case for the film company.

During his testimony the dentist declared that Miss Minter's teeth were in bad condition during the period in which she claims that she was forced to call a halt in her film work because of extreme suffering, and technical charts and explanations were offered in substantiation.

...Letters relative to the company's attitude on Miss Minter's absence due to the work, written by her mother, Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, to Dr. Hirtz, were also introduced.

* * * * *

May 25, 1920

LOS ANGELES HERALD

That 9 o'clock in the morning is a "reasonable" hour for a screen star to

begin work was an opinion given in the breach-of-contract suit of Mary Miles Minter against the American Film Co., on trial before United States Judge Trippet today.

This opinion was given on the witness stand by R. R. Neils, general manager of the company, who declared he came from the East and found Miss Minter's company "loafing on the job" at Santa Barbara.

Following this discovery, Mr. Neils testified, he made a rule that all members of the company must be on the "set" ready for work at 9 o'clock in the morning.

The first day following the issuing of this edict, the witness declared, Miss Minter was late. He said that he waited on the "set" for her to appear and that she did not get there until 10:30 o'clock.

"Miss Minter," the witness related he said to the screen star, "It is now 10:30. You have delayed the company one hour."

"Who are you?" was the haughty response Miss Minter made to him, according to Neils.

The witness said his orders for punctuality on the part of Miss Minter brought forth the remark from Mrs. Shelby, the star's mother, that the American Film Co. was a "tin can factory" and that "pictures cannot be produced by putting in time."

The manager of the film company said he explained to Miss Minter and her mother that punctuality on the part of the star was necessary because her pictures were costing twice as much as they should.

Lewis Victory Jefferson, a scenario writer, was the first witness called today by Attorney W. J. Ford for the film company. He told of a scenario known as the "Missing Woman," purchased for Miss Minter, but objected to by the star and her mother on the grounds that it was "immoral."

Jefferson said owing to Mrs. Shelby's objections, the alleged "immoral location" in it was taken out, but that it still did not satisfy Mrs. Shelby.

A council between Mrs. Shelby and the scenario staff of the company was described by the witness.

"Did she appear angry?" the witness was asked.

"Yes. She appeared to be intensely angry at us personally and individually," was the reply.

"What did she say?" demanded Attorney Ford.

"She said she would not put it on at first, but later added, 'All right if I have to, but God pity it, if we do.' "

The scenario writer was asked if Mrs. Shelby used any profanity in her remarks at that time. An objection to the question was sustained by Judge Trippet.

Another scenario written by himself had previously been submitted to Miss Minter, according to Mr. Jefferson. He was asked whether it caused any ill feeling toward Miss Minter when this was rejected.

"No," responded the witness, "if we sell one story in 10 we're lucky."

When R. R. Neils, general manager of the American Film Co., was called to the stand he stated that he had been general manager of the company for eight or nine years.

He said he came to California from Chicago, the company's headquarters, to get better "efficiency" at the Santa Barbara studio. On his arrival, he said, he found the company to be "loafing on the job." Part of this was due to the lack of punctuality on Miss Minter's part, he testified.

[A series of courtroom sketches accompanied the article.]

* * * * *

May 26, 1920

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Echoes of the war were heard yesterday in the suit of Mary Miles Minter against the American Film Corporation.

Miss Minter last week charged that the film corporation would not let her participate in war films and protested against her work in Liberty Loan drives.

R. R. Nehls, general manager of the film company, occupied the stand and vigorously denied that the film company protested against Miss Minter's activities. He said:

"Miss Minter was in the Fourth Liberty Loan drive. She spent three weeks

on the drive. During those three weeks we were not only paying her a salary of \$2250 a week, but she was worn out the week following and we gave her another week's rest at the rate of \$2250.

"In addition, we were paying the salaries of the other members of the company, who could not act during Miss Minter's absence. Miss Minter led the public to believe that she was giving her time for patriotic purposes. She got all the credit--at the company's expense--and we got none of it.

"When the flu period came along and all the studios were closing down we told Miss Minter if she would close down her company we would extend all the contracts after the flu period to cover the time we were closed. She said she would be willing to close providing we paid her the \$2250 a week while we were closed. I told her I did not think it very patriotic of her, because all other companies and directors were closing and extending their contracts to cover the loss. However, she refused, and so I told her that she and the others would have to work if they were to draw their salaries."

Miss Minter became very indignant during this testimony and wanted to speak, but her attorney, E. A. Meserve, motioned her to be quiet.

* * * * *

May 26, 1920

LOS ANGELES HERALD

The United States district court of Judge Trippet was converted into a film theater for a moment today while judge and jury were shown a picture of Mary Miles Minter registering horror in a bedroom scene.

At the request of attorneys for the American Film Co., which is being sued by Miss Minter for \$5000 for alleged breach of contract, the blinds were lowered on the courtroom windows while a projection machine threw a picture of the star on the wall.

Several lengths of reel revealing Mary Miles Minter clad in boudoir garments were shown in an effort on the part of Attorney W. J. Ford to prove that the screen star laughed in the wrong place and ruined that part of the picture.

Details of how the picture shown in court was taken were revealed by

Lloyd Ingraham, Miss Minter's director. He testified that the scenes had to be taken over because the star did not follow his directions.

On cross-examination by Attorney Meserve for Miss Minter, Mr. Ingraham admitted it is not at all unusual for scenes to be taken over in the making of a picture. He was then asked if this was frequently owing to the fault of the star.

"Yes," he answered, "they often cut capers in the making of a picture."

According to Mr. Ingraham Miss Minter warned him before starting work that morning that the scenes would not be good if he made her work.

"If you make me work today you'll surely have to take the scene over," the witness testified Miss Minter said to him.

* * * * *

May 27, 1920

LOS ANGELES HERALD

"Mary Miles Minter went at me in the fashion of a cat, knocked a checkerboard high in the air and a cigar out of my mouth, and made three personal attacks on me," R. R. Nehls, general manager of the American Film Company, testified in the court of United States District Judge Oscar A. Trippet yesterday, where Miss Minter is suing for \$4125 back salary she says is due her.

The company claims \$102,000 damages because of the alleged refusal of the star to complete her contract to work when told to do so. The case will go to the jury today, it is expected.

Miss Minter's alleged attack on the film company's general manager occurred, he said, after the players had been ordered to cease playing checkers on the set. The company's game board was removed, but Miss Minter brought her own, he asserted.

* * * * *

May 28, 1920

LOS ANGELES HERALD

Mary Miles Minter is victor in her suit against the American Film Co. for back salary. The jury in the court of United States District Judge Oscar A.

Trippet awarded her \$4000. She sued for \$4125. The jury by its verdict decided that the film star was obedient to the orders of the company.

Earlier in the day Miss Minter won another victory over the company when the court nonsuited the company's claim for \$102,000 against the actress on the ground of a violated contract. Miss Minter proved she was absent from work on the days mentioned because of a toothache.

* * * * *

June 3, 1920

LOS ANGELES RECORD

Rumors that Mary Miles Minter is 26 or 27, or any of a dozen other ages were definitely set at rest last Thursday, when a jury decision in Judge Trippet's federal court put it on record that the Realart star reached her 18th birthday on April 1, 1920.

"The Humor of a Hollywood Murder", Part 6

Evil Hollywood

February 9, 1922

DETROIT FREE PRESS

There seem to be two ways in which the Hollywood situation may be handled by the producers. One is by cleansing the colony so effectively that the world will believe it is purified. The other is by uprooting it from the face of the earth. On the whole the latter course seems much the simpler.

* * * * *

February 26, 1922

OMAHA BEE

Drive Garbage Element From Movies

Protesting the alleged scandalous actions of certain movie stars in Hollywood, the Motion Picture Theater Owners' Association of America has issued the following statement:

"There should be some effective way to remove the garbage element from the producing end of the motion picture business. The elimination of the dirty birds who have befouled the high positions into which the theater owners and public boosted them must be accomplished in some way.

"The odium of their malodorous conduct falls on the theater owner and this polluting group must no longer be permitted to hang their smeared linen on this exhibitors' line. It must be made plain to the public that the theater owners are not responsible for the conduct of these human filth gushers in the industry, that we utterly repudiate them and demand their removal from every place where their foul presence tends to contaminate our business.

"Now we have the Taylor murder with its divorce attachment, alias appendages, multiplicity of actresses, jealous and other scandalous circumstances involving well-known stars. The possibility of a well-known producer being mixed in confronts us and the whole mess of tragic obscenity is nauseating. [1]

"The belief in some quarters that the motion picture business is on the one side festering with crass immorality and on the other distended with bulgy and bulky money bags makes it very essential that theater owners become alive to the situation confronting them. It must be emphasized that theater owners are not responsible for these conditions and that they will keep faith with the public, that no person tainted with scandal shall appear in actor guise or otherwise on our screens."

* * * * *

April 1, 1922
MOVIE WEEKLY

Dorothy Gish said the attacks upon picture actors and actresses have affected her keenly: "When I walk down the street nowadays and someone recognizes me, I feel like turning my head so that I won't hear them say: 'Oh, there's another one of those picture actresses. I wonder when her story will be told on the front pages of the newspapers.' "

* * * * *

February 12, 1922

NEW YORK TELEGRAM

In Washington Representative Myron Herrick, of Oklahoma, declared the exposures justified his bill to prohibit beauty contests in newspapers to select moving picture stars.

"Girls all over the country are longing to get into the movies," Herrick said. "And whether they succeed or not their minds are perverted and their morals loosened by what their favorite screen stars are doing."

Herrick has introduced a bill to tax all moving picture producers and theatres fifty per cent of their net profits.

* * * * *

February 10, 1922

Richard Burritt

CHICAGO NEWS

Lot, pleading to save movieland, would have cried:

"Lord, will you spare movieland if a few players are found whose lives are above reproach?"

Were the Hollywood colony in peril of the divine wrath, Lot would have to strike a sharp bargain.

Many men have told me in all seriousness that movieland is a smear on American decency. Others who have followed the game closely for years have said that, were it not for the cleansing air of Southern California, the stench of the movies would asphyxiate clean-minded America.

* * * * *

February 20, 1922

BUFFALO EXPRESS

Speaking on the sanctity of human love last evening at the Central Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Dr. Robert J. MacAlpine, the pastor, said:

"Untainted love is the divinest thing this side of heaven. But tainted love is born of Hades. It has disgraced Hollywood. It threatens the very life center of the film world.

"The recent moral revelations in California's movie realm shocked the

self-respecting world. But, had it not been for the death tragedies in star circles, there would have been no revelation and no shock. The unsuspecting public would have moved on in peaceful ignorance. And undisturbed the malignant virus would have still gone on eating its cancerous way into the body vitals of American life.

"Did physical conditions exist with such destructive virulence, the state would long ago have quarantined the infested quarters and restricted the liberties of the infected parties. Public sentiment itself would have demanded it as a necessary protection to the health of society. Worse than such a pestilence has been running rampant in Hollywood. By accident, or incident, it has only recently been brought to light. And now no less is it necessary to protect society from its contagious germ. The whole cinematic bottom needs thorough housecleaning and disinfecting. If it doesn't get it, nothing short of moral disaster will follow. For, from the rotten source, the moral taint will appear on the screen in every city and hamlet in the land. If it be allowed to continue, society will pay the penalty by moral disintegration and decay. And this fair republic will reap the harvest of untold moral disease and pain and death. Nothing on earth is more certain."

* * * * *

February 11, 1922
PHILADELPHIA RECORD

Loose Los Angeles

It is possible that within the limits of the city of Los Angeles there are some people of refinement who deplore the flood of notoriety that has come upon the place, culminating in the tidal wave that found its crest in the melodramatic passing of William Desmond Taylor--or whatever his real name may have been. But no one would be able to guess this from the news dispatches that have been pouring out of that storm center into every little backwater community that maintains a printing press.

The voice of Los Angeles speaks through the megaphone of the movie director. The municipal authorities either sing small or take their cue from the dominant orator. The Mayor of the city recently felt it incumbent upon

him to announce to the world, or to such small part of the world as might give ear to his words in the clamor of more interesting voices, that Los Angeles was proud to be the capital of the moving picture world. Proud? Of what? There is nothing in Hollywood that any reputable city might be proud of, except the money it brings to the neighborhood--and it is this money which is responsible for the evils of which Hollywood now stands convicted.

It is remarkable that Hollywood should have any defenders at all; and yet one intelligent and sophisticated observer was recently moved to remark, in effect, that moral defections on the part of members of the movie world were no more worthy of reprehension than the forging of a check, or any other criminal lapse on the part of a clergyman would be. Again we come round to the eternal "root of all evil"--the love of money. Easy money, pouring lavishly into the pockets of those who have been unaccustomed to it, is at the bottom of the shame of Los Angeles. At Hollywood is gathered a vast colony of men and women who receive incomes out of all proportion to their intellectual merits. Flattery and admiration are lavished upon them far beyond their deserts. Their community has become, naturally enough, a nest of neurotic noxiousness. The whole place needs a healthy fumigation.

There are among these men and women, to be sure, some worthy, self-respecting actors and actresses who should not be condemned with the majority; but they are, unfortunately, the minority. They were prompt to declare that Hollywood must have a thorough housecleaning, but, as we remarked above, theirs is not the voice at the megaphone. Unfortunately, too, most of us who prefer to listen to the voice of the movie director, and to the printed words of his abettors in certain newspapers, have large and furry ears. The public has been a good deal of a jackass in its unlimited adoration of the film stars; and so to that extent, at least, it is responsible for the present deplorable state of the community which the pious first explorers called the "City of the Angels."

* * * * *

February 15, 1922

NASHVILLE BANNER

(reprinted from JOHNSON CITY STAFF)

The leprous colony at Hollywood will not be reformed and consequently will have to be destroyed.

* * * * *

February 11, 1922

NEW YORK HERALD

Chicago Suburb Will Ask to Have Name Changed

What's in a name? A lot, according to the citizens of Hollywood, Ill., a placid little suburb of Chicago.

Since the Arbuckle and Taylor cases were revealed the tiny Illinois town doesn't feel so placid. While it boasts of a movie theater, the Illinois Hollywood is innocent of Japanese butlers, love bungalows, Chinese dope peddlers and screen ingenues whose faces register "frozen horror."

Because of the notoriety of the movie colony, the residents of Chicago's suburb today announced they would have the name of their town changed.

* * * * *

February 18, 1922

TAMPA TRIBUNE

Hollywood, Ill, wants its name changed. Don't worry, little Illinois town, everybody knows the only ill Hollywood is in California.

* * * * *

February 10, 1922

GARY POST-TRIBUNE

Hollywood Must be Purified by U.S. Government

Hollywood must be purified by the government, Canon William Sheafe Chase, veteran movie reformer, declared today in an interview.

He demanded passage by congress of a resolution to investigate the film colony and prevent its scandals from debauching the mind of America.

"Actors and actresses of the screen," he charged, "are teaching the public free love, adultery, murder, infidelity and lust. And," he added, "too many of them naturally are practicing what they teach.

"The murder of William Desmond Taylor is another reason why Hollywood

should be investigated," Chase asserted.

* * * * *

February 22, 1922

NEW YORK TIMES

(Albany)--Exchange of personalities between Senator Walker, minority leader of the Senate, and Canon Chase of Brooklyn marked the hearing this afternoon before the Assembly Ways and Means Committee.

Pointing his finger at Senator Walker, Canon Chase said:

"It's time that the people of this State were told how much you, as a paid representative of the movie interests in the Legislature, are receiving."

"It's absolutely none of your business," replied Senator Walker.

"Well, I think they are entitled to know how much you are getting from the movie interests," retorted Canon Chase.

"I tell you it's none of your business what I get from the motion picture interests, any more than it is any business of mine what you get in your collections," Senator Walker exclaimed.

"Remember, Senator, that you are a member of the Senate," said Canon Chase.

"Yes, I am a Senator by election of the people, and not a self-ordained lobbyist like you are," replied Senator Walker.

"I appear at this hearing as a citizen," Canon Chase said.

"You've been here most of the time as a disturber," retorted the Senator.

Then he talked about the accusation that he had received a salary from the moving picture interests.

"Well, maybe I have bragged about it, as you say, and I'll brag about it from here to California and back, if I want to, but I want you to understand once and for all that it's none of your business how much I get," said Senator Walker.

In addition to Canon Chase, Joseph Levensen, Secretary to the Motion-Picture Censorship Commission spoke. "If you think the present law is too

weak," Secretary Levensen said, "then you can add a section which would give the commission authority to eliminate all movie stars who do not bear respectable reputations. I suppose if you gave us that power about 50 per cent of the stars would be eliminated."

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February 17, 1922

NEW YORK WORLD

Scorns Trip to Hollywood Because of Taylor Killing

(Johnstown)--After winning a trip to Hollywood and other film centers, Miss Cecilia Correll, seventeen, has refused to go because of "conditions in Hollywood as revealed by the killing of William Desmond Taylor."

Miss Correll won the trip by polling the most votes in a local popularity contest. She says she was very anxious to get into the movies and wanted to make the trip until the Taylor incident. Another young woman has been selected to make the trip.

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February 15, 1922

NASHVILLE TENNESSEAN

The Free State of Hollywood closes its gates to the State of California's sleuths. None there are who will risk blacklisting by the stars of moviedom, through giving aid to the State.

When in Hollywood, do as the orgiastic worshippers of Bacchus.

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February 19, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO JOURNAL

Salvation Army Would Help Clean Up Films

(Los Angeles)--Evangeline C. Booth, commander of the Salvation Army in the United States, here on an inspection tour, tonight pledged the aid of the army in a "clean-up" of any obnoxious element that might exist in the ranks of filmdom.

Intimating that the immoral escapades of a few film notables have cast a reflection upon film stars everywhere, through the widespread notoriety given

their acts, Miss Booth said filmdom should bar from its ranks any such undesirable characters.

She offered the support of the Salvation Army to be used by motion picture officials in cooperation with moves to better the moral tone of the motion picture world, whenever necessary.

March 19, 1922

Joe Webb

AUSTIN AMERICAN

Perhaps, after all, the movie stars do get the big salaries their press agents say they get. Dope is expensive and how could they afford to stay hopped-up if they didn't make big money?

Also, when the producers declare that a certain feature picture cost a million, perhaps they are including the dope the stars used while it was being made.

February 11, 1922

CLEVELAND PRESS

In 1622, at Stratford, Shakespeare's own home, his own company, called the King's Company was bribed by the Council to leave town without playing, the town records showing that six shillings were paid to the players "for not playing at the hall."

Actors were thought of in those olden days as we now think of tramps. From that low estimate, actors of honorable character and conduct thru the centuries have greatly raised their profession in public estimation.

It took a long time to build up a reputation which is being rapidly undermined by the doings of some of the movie actors at Hollywood.

February 11, 1922

"Father Omaha"

OMAHA NEWS

Open Letter: To Will Hays, Boss of the Movies

William: It is reported that you are considering transferring the movie colony from Hollywood to New York.

But as I pass from the pajamas-and-booze atmosphere of the Arbuckle case to the pink-nighties-and-cocaine trimmings of the Taylor mystery, I ask: Why not consider some habitation outside of the borders of the United States?

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February 9, 1922

DES MOINES REGISTER

Rev. George Wood Anderson yesterday flayed the motion picture industry as an "evil."

"The truth is," he said, "that our motion picture colonies are as foul as Sodom and Gomorrah. Our peril is not a yellow peril, but a Hollywood peril."

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February 18, 1922

SANTA ANA REGISTER

One thing is certain, decent people are sick and tired of having to explain to their children what the row's all about when some idol of the screen is shattered.

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February 21, 1922

LONDON NEWS

It is stated that American cinema managers have decided not to show films which feature notorious film stars.

Mr. King, of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association, paid a high tribute to the standard existing among English film actors and actresses.

"There are no such scandals here," he said, "possibly because our artists are better types, have to work harder for their salaries, and do not have so much easily earned money to throw about."

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February 10, 1922

KANSAS CITY STAR

(reprinted from Fort Scott Tribune)

The abandonment of Hollywood would simply be pulling the scab off. The sore will not be cured until the public abandons the characters that have made Hollywood infamous.

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February 10, 1922

CINCINNATI TRIBUNE

(Cincinnati)--"The motion picture industry should not be condemned because one or two persons out of its personnel of many thousand workers have been guilty of indiscreet acts," David Wark Griffith, premier motion picture director of America, said yesterday. "The rotters should be kicked out of the business, and sooner or later they will be."

Mr. Griffith said that he had never known, seen or talked to William Desmond Taylor, film director, slain recently in his Los Angeles home. He added that he had not been in California for three years.

"All I know about Hollywood," he said in answer to a question, "is what I have read in the papers." But I imagine there must be some fire where there is so much smoke."

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February 8, 1922

CLEVELAND PRESS

It is a national disgrace that so often men and women who by their cleverness and beauty find themselves among the highest paid entertainers of their generation cannot lead normal lives, heed ordinary proprieties and conduct themselves without offense. Present conditions, scandalizing the country, cannot be permitted to continue. The public holds its nose and demands a change.

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February 21, 1922

Joe Webb

AUSTIN AMERICAN

Fatty Arbuckle is out with a defense of the morals of movie folks. That

ought to be enough to make it unanimous for the prosecution.

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March 5, 1922

NEW YORK HERALD

(Los Angeles)--In order to place the motion picture industry upon the highest possible plane the Federation of Art was organized today in Hollywood. Its membership is made up of four other organizations, the Writers Guild, the Cinematographers Association, the Actors Equity Association and the Motion Picture Directors Association.

Although its purpose in general is to further the good of motion pictures, the federation plans to take vigorous action against the undesirables in the motion picture industry.

Actors or other members of the industry who refuse to conduct their private lives according to the highest standards are to be drummed out of camp, so to speak. The writers through their representatives will refuse to sell stories for their use, the cinematographers will refuse to photograph them, the Actors Equity members will refuse to appear in pictures with them and the members of the Directors Association will refuse to direct them.

Hollywood Treads Softly

February 10, 1922

Estelle Lindsey

LOS ANGELES EXPRESS

While Mabel Normand, in a darkened room slept the sleep of exhaustion A. McArthur, publicity director for the Sennett studios and the Cerebus at present standing between the star and the press, today dictated this statement:

"Miss Normand and Taylor never were in love with each other. Why in the name of sense do the newspapers keep on harping on that silly stuff?

"Miss Normand was never engaged to Mack Sennett and he never was jealous

of Taylor."

"Mrs. John Borden of Chicago, claiming to be a close friend of Miss Normand, claims that Miss Normand was engaged to Sennett," I suggested.

"Then she was talking nonsense," was the emphatic retort. "I didn't mean to say anything further for publication, but I'll say that. All we are trying to do is to keep the poor little girl's name out of the papers. Every time it occurs in connection with the murder it injures her."

"What about the statement of Underwood, arrested in Topeka? He says a woman killed Taylor. Has Miss Normand any theories on that subject?"

McArthur turned about and made a gesture of utter disgust.

"The poor nut," he blurted. "Underwood is crazy, bughouse. His statement is bunk, just bunk.

"Honest, we are not going to give out any more statements for Miss Normand. We are not going to deny or affirm. We are tired, burned out.

"Walter Underwood is just a poor boob. Why should we care what he says?"

"Are you certain Miss Normand is asleep?" I inquired.

"She should be," replied Mr. McArthur, peeping between some heavy velvet curtains that separated the living-room from a rear chamber. "Yes, she's asleep and I wish the gossip was as quiet. That's all.

"For God's sake, keep the girl's name out of this mess."

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February 16, 1922

James Foley

LOS ANGELES EXPRESS

The Woe of the Publicity Man

("All we want to do is to keep their names out of the paper."

--Movie Publicity Man in Recent Interview)

The Publicity Man wore a pair of gumshoes [2]

and his suit was the somberest black.

He walked down the alley and looked all about

that nobody followed his track.

He had on a mask and his cap was pulled down

and you never would know it was he.
He came in the back door with a soft, stealthy step,
as quiet as quiet could be.
He looked all about and he stole up the stairs
where the dramatic editor sat.
His tread was so light and his knock on the door
was the quietest rat-a-tat-tat.
And the editor asked what the news of the stars,
for he knew there must be, more or less.
The Publicity Man whispered low and he said: "Sh-h-h!
We are keeping their names from the press!"
The Publicity Man had no picture or scroll
or lay-out or story or such.
He was mum as an oyster and still as could be
with a blue pencil fast in his clutch.
And the editor said: "I will run a weird tale
of the slim stars and short ones and stout."
The Publicity Man all a-tremble and pale, said:
"Oh, Editor, pray, cut it out!"
The the Editor said: "What's the matter, old boy?
What's the which and the why and the how?"
"The stars want a rest," so the other replied.
"There is too much publicity now!
We have had so much stuff of their furs and their gowns
and their hair and their winning red lips.
Till they're simply worn out with the strain of it all
and just now all they want is eclipse."
The Publicity Man gathered up all the stuff
that the editor had on his hook
And he looked all about and he whispered goodby
with a frightened and furtive look.
Then he put back his mask and he stole out the door

and he dropped down a coal hole to hide.
For the soul of the man was all stricken and sad,
and all humbled and sore was his pride.
Then he came out at dark and he gumshoed his way
to the place where he wrote his weird stuff
And he turned out the lights and he sat in the dark
and he said: "I'm an old bird and tough,
And I've seen some of life as it comes and it goes,
as much as a man can, I guess,
But I never once thought in the whole of my days
I'd be keeping things out of the press."

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February 6, 1922

Edward Doherty

NEW YORK NEWS

(Los Angeles)--There are hundreds of substantial citizens who believe the movie interests would spend millions of dollars not to catch the murderer; but to prevent the real truth from coming out.

They fear that with the revelations coming out of the mystery, the doings of other film actors and actresses may become known, and these are things that would wipe out many a fair reputation once they got into circulation.

They fear that there might be some misunderstandings if the fans learned about those very free moonlight parties, sometimes held in the Beverly Hills district, where nymphs and naiads dance in costumes made purely of melting moonbeams.

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February 10, 1922

BALTIMORE AMERICAN

(Los Angeles)--The casualties brought to light by the probe of the Taylor murder mystery continue to mount.

Mabel Normand has suffered a nervous breakdown.

Mary Miles Minter is so weak from grief that she has to be barricaded in her home.

Claire Windsor has a severe attack of insomnia.

And now comes the report that husky Mack Sennett is ill, too ill to be seen, too ill to talk.

Meanwhile the district attorney is talking rather bluntly about a "conspiracy of silence" in the Taylor case.

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February 13, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO CALL-POST

In the center of this maelstrom of undesirable publicity and probing Hollywood film stars are burrowing into a cloud of silence like frightened rabbits.

Newspaper men are met with a wall of silence at every turn. One reporter was sent on a three weeks' vacation today to commune with nature after a nervous collapse in attempting to solve the mystery.

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February 11, 1922

OAKLAND TRIBUNE

Our Correspondent Afield

(Hollywood)--I have visited the police station where is kept the famous carpet and the famous grill. With each passing hour a new suspect is placed upon this carpet and with each hour the police begin, all over again, a "gruelling examination." There is no one in Hollywood today who can claim to any position among his fellows unless he has been grilled most gruellingly. Outside of this grill room it is more difficult to find a policeman than a suspect. They have run to a convenient cover furnished by the united society of film magnates. In the evening, as I sit here writing this only true account of the famous case, I can hear the sh-shish-ing of these magnates and their corps of agents, a shishing that is proving very effective. Over the wave of slush, one might say, has come a wave of shish. No man dare say his soul is his own if that soul is under contract to the movies. I am determined

to solve the puzzle--but first I shall find it.

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February 9, 1922

PITTSBURGH POST

(Los Angeles)--The dynamic energy of the police in the fruitless search for the solution of the mysterious murder of William Desmond Taylor was exceeded today by the massed and hurricane activity of the kings of the film industry to ring down the curtain on the unceasing flow of scandal that has surrounded the tragedy.

The police centered their search on meager clues that ended in blind alleys--mysterious pink nighties that disappear--initialed handkerchiefs that cannot be found--hints of secret loves of beautiful and unnamed women stars--rejected lovers--scented love letters--

The chain is endless.

Throughout Hollywood the great men of the industry were closeted with men and women idols of the screen, making every effort to hush up the scandal.

Giddy parties in the fast road house resorts have been cancelled. The lights of the white light cabarets no longer shine on decolleted and shimmy loving women of the screen.

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February 26, 1922

Frank Vreeland

NEW YORK HERALD

Since the recent expose of Hollywood great solidarity has sprung up among all the players, though probably many of them wouldn't recognize it under that name. Various cliques who formerly disparaged one another are now firmly united in the declaration that its people are just about the grandest little bipeds that ever stepped on the gas.

Moreover, it has been brought home to the celluloid denizens even more forcefully than after the Arbuckle case that hereafter they must walk a chalk line without waving their arms wildly.

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February 9, 1922

BUFFALO NEWS

(New York)--"One hundred million American dollars invested in the film industry are endangered by the acts of a dozen or so wastrels and degenerates," Carl Laemmle, one of the greatest movie magnates, declared today.

"There are thousands of good girls and upright men in Hollywood. And we're not going to stand for the scandalous few. They stick out like a sore thumb. And we'll chop off that sore thumb."

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February 6, 1922

BUFFALO NEWS

(Buffalo)--Censorship was a topic on which Miss Lillian Gish declined to comment.

"Please don't make me talk about censorship," she said. "I am paid to act, not to think."

Hollywood is another topic that hasn't any particular interest to her, Miss Lillian declared.

"Of course there are bad men and women in the film industry," she asserted. "Why, even the weather is bad now and then. There are bad men and women in every walk of life. But I do think the press does wrong when it overplays the scandals and crimes of picture people."

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April 1, 1922

Irma

MOVIE WEEKLY

Romance in the movie colony is so pale, these days. Nobody is admitting being engaged to wed. They seem to feel that it isn't proper to even be in love any more, since all this scandal has been stirred up in the film colony. Most of the girls are behaving like cloistered nuns, these days.

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February 16, 1922
Louis Joseph Vance
MILWAUKEE JOURNAL

During my brief career as a motion picture producer in Los Angeles in 1915 I heard often and again girls whose dress and manner indicated that they had been brought up in homes of refinement, offer themselves more or less brazenly to the casting director in return for a day's work as an extra woman, at a wage of \$3 or \$5 or it might be \$7.50--not for the money involved always, though heaven knew many of them needed money, but for the chance they foresaw of catching the eye of the director by some manifestation of good camera value and being thereby started on the way up to the eminences.

It isn't in human nature to resist such temptations. Neither is it done.

Bear in mind that the invitation to irregular moral relations in this last related instance didn't come from old hands in the picture business, but from inexperienced beginners, many of them young women drawn from that very class which holds up its hands in holy horror of the goings-on of picture folk in Hollywood.

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February 18, 1922
HOLLYWOOD CITIZEN

"I think," said Rob Wagner, chairman of the Writer's Club committee on the subject of motion picture and Hollywood publicity, "that much of the misconception that arises about Hollywood is due to the continued use of the word 'colony'. People in the east look upon us here as a remote, detached 'colony', probably with a fence around it, making our own morals and dominated by motion picture people who simply wallow in debauchery.

"In view of these facts, I ask that in future the word 'colony' in connection with the motion picture industry in Hollywood be banned."

Two other words were asked to be placed on the taboo list as well: "Movie" and "lot" in connection with the studios here. [3]

Editorial Contemplations

February 10, 1922

TULSA TRIBUNE

Doctors hurry, bankers worry, another movie murder threatens to tear down the assets of another line of movie reels. At twice the salary of the President of the United States the movie producers hire Will Hays out of the President's cabinet to lend a touch of respectability to a gigantic business that has lost its place of popular respect because it has deported itself in defiance of public decency.

Will Hays has announced that he is going to Hollywood to personally investigate conditions there. He has served notice sufficiently in advance to find things remarkably good and pleasing there by the time of his advent. Not unlike the old-fashioned Tulsa police raids, a tip in time will save many.

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February 9, 1922

KANSAS CITY STAR

Tricky Ways of the Hollywood Clues

The difficulty that confronts the Hollywood police seems to be a superfluity of clues. If they had only one they might know what to do. Now, there's the handkerchief picked up at the scene of the crime, an initialed handkerchief, too. A beautiful clue, a favorite always. But the police no sooner start work on the handkerchief than a feminine garment shows up, pink, so we read, and marked with still other initials.

This is confusing. Nor is that all; letters are found, and while the police are reading the letters the handkerchief disappears. Then while they are trying to find where the handkerchief disappeared to, the letters disappear. It is announced the letters have been returned to the writers of them, but the writers say it's no such thing, and again the police head swims.

The thing threatens to become complicated. It's no longer a question of finding who fired the shot, not that merely; but who took the handkerchief

and where did the letters go.

In a way, it's a little unfair to the police. They doubtless are competent and prepared to work on a murder case, but no police anywhere is qualified to reveal the trick in professional sleight of hand. It's not their line. If they pick up a handkerchief, mark it Exhibit A and put it in the safe, that's their job done. They can't be expected to sit there and watch it--the murderer might get away. The letters, too; now we see them and now we don't. Pouf--they're gone. What is to do? If we were the police we'd shrug.

The pink garment, we hope, is still there. It may turn out to be unimportant, but the authorities ought to hang on to something. With things disappearing out the window the way they do in that town, and everybody saying, honest, and on their honor, they don't know anything about it, evidence becomes of real value. Essential, maybe. Especially where there's so much one day and so little the next. That's why it seems one good reliable clue, one clue that would stay fixed overnight is what the police seem to need, rather than so many handkerchief, pink garment and letter clues that have no stability. No character, so to speak. What you might call Hollywood, or movie clues.

Maybe a reliable or trustworthy clue is too much to expect in connection with a Hollywood murder, but even so the police have rights in Hollywood as well as the movies. If anybody tries to take that pink thing away, after all that's happened to the other clues, the police would be justified in demanding of such a person, or persons, what they want it for. That's the inflexible position we'd take if we were the Hollywood police--considering all the circumstances, that is, and not meaning to be harsh.

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February 26, 1922

NEW YORK TIMES

Thoughts on Hollywood

There is no need to accept the stories of "drug rings," "weird love cults," and other short words fitting easily into headlines which have come from Los Angeles since the last homicide in Hollywood. Perhaps they are true;

probably not. Most assertions on any subject are untrue--especially in California, where everything is large, including the imagination of the inhabitants. If it is true that most residents of Hollywood make love carelessly, extensively, and without discrimination, it is because most of them know no other way to kill time. The same excuse could hardly be offered for similar offenders elsewhere. The pleasures of the senses are popular in Hollywood because most of the residents know no other pleasures--not, as elsewhere, because the pleasures of the intellect have been tried and found wanting.

Hollywood's residents are certainly no worse than would be any similar number of attractive, uneducated young people who had suddenly come into great wealth and a peculiarly heady sort of fame. Most of us, in their situation, would do as they do; since we are not in their situation, but one materially far less prosperous, we make the best of our comparative moral grandeur. Because the temptations of wealth and luxury have never assailed us we fall on those who have succumbed. We may have done as badly with less excuse, but we haven't been caught; and if we were caught, we should never gain the unhappy notoriety of the rich and famous. So what we take out on Hollywood is our resentment, not at its wickedness, but at its wealth.

We go forth joyfully to indulge in the national, perhaps the universally human sport, of kicking a man who is down. On vague, confusing and perhaps wholly unfounded suspicion we are willing to lynch a town and an industry en masse; and, as in most lynching mobs, righteous wrath is perhaps less potent than a sort of envy.

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February 16, 1922

PHILADELPHIA RECORD

The writers of detective stories have offered no real help in the hunt for the murderer of Mr. Taylor, in Los Angeles. The ability to compound the details of a thriller does not imply the ability to analyze the compound of details left behind by a real assassin. Even the redoubtable Conan Doyle did not retire from fiction to Scotland Yard; he retired to spiritualism.

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February 22, 1922

BUFFALO NEWS

The Movie Mind

Take the word of Thompson Buchanan, movie playwright, all this pother over a murder and a scandal or two or three in Hollywood is but part of a clever plot.

Wall Street has done it. He will not go so far as to say that the moneyed villains of Wall Street procured the murder of William Desmond Taylor. But Wall Street is behind the campaign to "blacken the names" of the producers and the actors. It was Wall Street that hired agitators to shout for a censorship. Wall Street plans to "ruin the industry and then buy in the wreck".

Wall Street's ulterior purpose--but of course you have fathomed it already--is "to control public opinion, to make sure nothing antagonistic to its interest is uttered to the public."

One of the dreariest of indoor pastimes is to dissect an asinine argument.

The image of a malevolent, closely knit organization controlling the nation's wealth and plotting, plotting, plotting, persists in only a few quaint minds such as Thompson Buchanan's.

It is equally obvious, is it not, that any group of investors who desired to buy movie companies could do so without any overwhelming difficulty? We suspect that there is not a financier of consequence in New York who has not been implored at one time or another to back or help this movie concern or that. The greatest companies are avowedly owned by bankers and their stocks are quoted daily on the open exchanges.

And isn't it just like the want-wits of Wall Street to set out deliberately to destroy utterly the value of a million dollars' worth of films of some star who is working for them, or for their debtors?

Why, then, all the space Mr. Buchanan got yesterday? Because Mr. Buchanan's mental processes so perfectly reveal what ails a great part of the

movie industry. Read him and you understand all. You comprehend at last that the master minds of the movies are not osseous, as perhaps you had supposed, bus viscous, melting easily to a thin fluid when slightly heated.

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February 20, 1922
CHARLOTTE OBSERVER

When the eastward movement of the moving picture people gets under way, as it is quite sure to do before many days, the movie people might come to the inexhaustible field of the North Carolina mountains. A suspicion may lurk that life in the mountain regions of North Carolina is too tame, but we should think that after recent Los Angeles developments, a little tameness is what the moving picture world is in need of. The staged banquet and jazz party is going out of popular favor, but if some of that sort must yet be produced, the North Carolina mountaineer can supply a few bottles of the labeled "in bond" that would have a more riotous effect than anything they have been able to get out in California. So, they need not hold back on that score.

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February 10, 1922
HELENA INDEPENDENT

Worries Los Angeles

It is not surprising that every obstacle possible seems to be thrown in the way of the officers seeking a solution of the movie murder mystery at Hollywood. The salacious Arbuckle case and several other cases of less prominence, capped by the Taylor murder, has started an agitation in New York, where most of the big producers live, to have the California studios scrapped and the movie folk moved to Gotham, which doesn't mind a murder or a smelly orgy every day.

Naturally, the Californians don't like the idea of one of the biggest industries in Los Angeles being moved away. Therefore, the big moving picture companies, which are reported to be exercising powerful influence to soft-pedal the scandal, are probably receiving much encouragement from the

commercial interests of the city.

To complicate the situation, Will Hays, who is soon to be the directing head of five of the largest moving picture producing agencies, is reported to have said that he will move Hollywood from California and set up the colony in New York.

Hays is too much of a politician to make such a break, in our opinion. Even if he thought the idea a good one, he would never publicly advocate it, for if the plan is carried out, California would not go Republican or Democratic either in 1924. It would go crazy.

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February 8, 1922

Gil Cowan

GLENDAL NEWS

Los Angeles Mayor George E. Cryer in this morning's papers tried to drag Los Angeles out of the mud--but it rained.

It seems that the Mayor thinks the movie colony is all right. He would have people believe that it isn't as bad as painted--but they paint too much in the movies.

Without discussing the Taylor murder mystery, but bearing down on the conditions in Hollywood, or Califilmland in general, it must be said that there are a half dozen great big contributing causes for the bad repote which is to be eliminated by the industry.

First--Discharge all of the low-brow hangers on, cousins of the director, friends of the star, or other persons who do not merit the positions they hold. This likely would reduce production costs 50 per cent.

Second--Install managers who will not be subject to the petty politics of the studio and have absolute power over directors, stars and property. Many a dollar has been lost because of some crazy idea on the part of a director.

Third--Instruct the publicity department to eliminate all salacious sayings in connection with problem plays; censor any sensuous "stills" and otherwise attract patronage on the merit of the complete film alone.

Fourth--The State of California should have a law enabling it to deport undesirable citizens. Thousands of girls fling themselves upon the industry for support. Naturally, they are "cheap." There should be some way of sending them back to Kokomo and Kalamazoo.

Fifth--But, but most important of all, there should be white men--real red blooded Americans owning and controlling the industry. A refined, educated person has no desire to enter the employ of the unscrupulous and money-mad who were brought up in the perverting influence of downtown New York, or some other salacious center. [4]

Hollywood is pure, sweet, simple, wonderful--compared with the eastern environment picture people are forced into. If the calcium light must play on a dead director why not turn it toward some of the producers who are still alive and countenancing unsavory things about their studios?

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February 15, 1922

Hereward Carrington

ALBANY NEWS

Our personality is built-up largely by what we SEE. Our eyesight is our greatest educator. So true is this that it has been calculated that not more than six per cent of those born blind actually attain sufficient character and mentality to become self-supporting!

The "movies" are today a constant series of visual suggestions. And we are all creatures of suggestion! We are built-up largely by what we hear, feel and see.

Those who have seen movies in the making know that the directors dominate the entire case, men and women alike. And it is a psychological fact that it would be easy for a strong director to carry this domination beyond the studio, for good or for evil.

Every actor or actress is better or worse for the role he depicts. None can live two roles forever, even on the stage and off, and escape having them co-mingle, any more any more than Dr. Jekyll could escape from Mr. Hyde. Usually the evil overwhelms the good.

There are two distinct kinds of pictures. Those that represent life as it is,--extol courage, honor, sincerity and the higher qualities of man's nature. These are undoubtedly beneficial, and are a source of great good to the community, and to those who make them.

The other kind of pictures, appealing to mawkish sentimentality, extolling the pettier emotions of jealousy, vanity, the worship of brute force and the frequent misinterpretation of the true values of life, are a source of great mischief and lead to an entirely warped conception of society as a whole.

This sort of picture sacrifices fundamental truths in order to appeal to false sentimentality.

For instance, a handsome crook is shrouded in a cloak of romance. He is captioned "a gentleman crook," whose finer instincts remain unstained, although he transgresses every law. And those who uphold the law, are either held up to ridicule or an odious light.

What is this but a very subtle justification of crime?

The natural effect of this upon young and untrained minds is to confuse actual vice and crime with heroic glamour.

The undoubted result of this can be no more than that many are led by these suggestions and false conceptions to a life of instinctive defiance to the law, or even into the commission of actual crime.

The recent murder of William Taylor, with its sordid horror and morbid revelations, would doubtless serve as an excellent "super-release!" The romantic scenario writer probably would go as far as to concoct some theatrical justification for this crime, and strive to weave a halo of romance about the perpetrator, even to the extent of marrying him to the heroine!

That's the psychology of "movie madness."

* * * * *

February 18, 1922

Arthur James

MOVING PICTURE WORLD

The Taylor tragedy was not the murder of an individual but, if the newspapers are to be credited, an out-cropping of the wild, hectic, dissolute, drug crazed seething that is the secret but usual life we all of us live day by day and night by night in the dishevelled, disordered phantasmagoria that beggars fiction and challenges the abysses of human imagination.

* * * * *

February 11, 1922

TACOMA LEDGER

(reprinted from ST. PAUL DISPATCH)

Who killed William Desmond Taylor is a mystery as absorbing as anything Sherlock Holmes ever solved. Millions of people are more curious to know the answer to this riddle than about any of the great questions of the day. Some are interested in the rise and fall of stocks and bonds, the price of wheat, the Genoa conference, the next big fight or baseball dope, but more are watching developments at Los Angeles than are attracted by any of those other things. Every little bit of information so far deepens the mystery and whets the appetite for more. The "suspects" soon will be numerous enough to make a parade, eight abreast, which will be 10 minutes in passing "a given point."

* * * * *

February 3, 1922

RICHMOND NEWS LEADER

Spoiled Idols

The murder of William Desmond Taylor, movie director, comes so quickly on the heels of the Arbuckle case that, no matter who the slayer may prove to be, the country will be confirmed in its conviction that the movie colony at Hollywood has had its head turned by adulation.

It is not a new thing. One of the oldest and most curious chapters in human psychology tells how the successive popular idols of centuries have been "spoiled" until they lost their perspective. When Greek youths won fame in the Olympic games, no doubt there were successful gamblers who entertained them lavishly and silly women who went "crazy" about them. In Latin

literature, there are many echoes of the applause given gladiators. If the truth were discoverable, it probably would be found that Sir Launcelot was as conceited as a Derby jockey of today, and that Sir Galahad spent as much time in front of a mirror as on his knees. A few centuries more and the "spoiled class" consisted of the mercenary chieftain, the condottiere. One need only read Venetian history to see how insufferable these popular idols became. The greatest condottiere of them all solemnly warned the Italian people never to give another man such favor as they heaped upon him: It was dangerous to the state.

So the list might be followed to our own day. Contemporary America differs from other countries in earlier ages only in that, so far as one can see, they spoiled only one class, whereas America spoils a hundred. Whoever has his name often in the newspapers and frequently appears before the public is in danger of infection from the germ of self-importance. Escape from ruin may be possible. A cure is not.

February 18, 1922

SAVANNAH NEWS

Somebody with a bright idea wants to "probe" the moving picture industry. But what does somebody want to find out? The government is not going to investigate unless there is a probability that a law is being broken by the industry, and so far while there may be a lot of individuals in the movies breaking laws, what is there in the recent cases of Arbuckle and Taylor for the United States to look into? Will actors and actresses be all of them asked if they smoke cigarettes and chew gum and dance? Will they be asked if they take a little drink now and then when they think the brand is safe? Will they all be asked if they have led strictly moral lives? Will they be made to tell the truth about their salaries?

February 10, 1922

KANSAS CITY STAR

The Outrage on Movie Privacy

The privileged class of Hollywood seems inclined to resent public interest in what that class regards as essentially a private murder. It is a view, of course, for which something may be said. Movie actors and actresses are entitled to preserve decently the privacies of family life as much as anybody. They are, in a sense, a single great family, as is shown by the fact that they leave their wardrobes around indiscriminately at each other's houses.

Very well, then, if they are entitled to family privacy, is the public concerned in one of their own exclusive murders? It was, as all accounts show, conducted with entire propriety. It wasn't flaunted in the public's face nor committed in such a manner as to constitute a breach of the public peace. Except technically, of course. But what is meant is, that it was done quietly--almost with reserve. Indeed, the delicacy observed by the guilty person, the modesty and shrinking, ought to go far to disprove the charge so often made that the manners of moviedom are loud and vulgar. As murders go, this was a refined one. There was no public brawling, no public display of bad taste, no shocking public violence. It was a parlor murder, done in a private residence and apparently at a respectable hour. Moreover it was done upon a person of irreproachable public manners, of pleasing, even courtly, address--a gentleman if clothes ever made one. All the movie ladies said so, and even maintained it in strong terms, so we read, which again goes to show it.

Thus it is established it was a private murder, a family murder, a gentlemanly perhaps even ladylike murder. And exclusive, it goes without saying.

Such is the view held by moviedom, which inquires with raised and penciled eyebrows where the public gets in. Well, the public does seem a little abashed. It apparently had no idea when it first intruded what a private little affair it was. It had no idea it was going to run into pink initialed nightwear, letters hidden in the toe of a riding boot and other little domestic kickshaws of a light housekeeping character of similar nature. It was like blundering into a bathroom when it was in use.

Unconventional in its own family circle moviedom may be, but the public, being perhaps a trifle narrow--provincial even--couldn't help but feel some embarrassment. To that extent, at least, moviedom does occupy the stronger position. It was the intruder upon, not the intruder. And its feelings, though strong, are not feelings of embarrassment.

Its feeling seems to be that when the public looks at a movie pink nightie it ought first to pay at the box office. In a word, the movies resent their industry being commercialized to gratify public curiosity. It's being lowered, cheapened, vulgarized by an intrusive and prying spirit that respects neither privacy nor decency. This pink garment and these letters--this murder even--were not for release.

Still, the thing has gone so far now movie privacy probably will not be able to regain its countenance just yet. The public and the police are in, intrusively or not, and probably will insist on looking around a bit. The murder, private or not, is now public and the public will have its gossip. It may be demoralizing to a privileged profession--the talk, that is--but mystery murders are one of the public's weaknesses. Maybe the film industry will admit that; and if moviedom should happen to have any weakness of its own, it will understand how the public feels and try to put up with the annoyance.

* * * * *

(to be continued)

NEXT ISSUE:

25 Flashes of Mabel Normand

"The Humor of a Hollywood Murder" Part 7:

The Kidnaping of Henry Peavey; Odds & Ends;

Tall Tales #3: The Atlantic City Confession;

NOTES:

[1]The "well-known producer" was obviously a reference to Mack Sennett.

[2]"Gumshoes" were gum-soled shoes, used for walking very quietly.

[3]"Movie" was originally a slang term and the industry preferred the highbrow term "motion picture."

[4]This is an anti-semitic reference to the fact that most of the movie moguls (Zukor, Lasky, Laemmle, Fox, Mayer, Goldwyn, Schenck, etc.) were Jewish.

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.uno.edu/~drif/arbuckle/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>

For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 10 -- October 1993 Editor: Bruce Long *
* All reprinted material is in the public domain *

CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE:

25 Flashes of Mabel Normand

"The Humor of a Hollywood Murder" Part 7:

The Kidnapping of Henry Peavey; Odds & Ends;

Tall Tales #3: The Atlantic City Confession

What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

Mabel Normand was one of the central personalities in the Taylor case. She was involved in a romantic relationship with him and was the last person to see him alive (except for the killer) prior to his murder. The following press items provide some insight into her unique and colorful personality, from her childhood through her years as "Queen of Comedy", and the Taylor and Dines shootings.

25 Flashes of Mabel Normand

November 5, 1921

Beverly Crane

MOVIE WEEKLY

...We steered the conversation a few years back to Mabel's tomboyhood and got her to reminiscing..."Another time I remember being in disgrace was when I accidentally dropped a quarter in a contribution box at church, instead of the nickel I had intended. You can imagine my consternation! I was in a very strict Catholic school, where it was hard to get money. When I perceived my mistake, I was frantic, but I didn't let it go by, oh no! I began rummaging wildly in the contribution box. The man who held the box was scandalized. Dollar bills flew, nickels and dimes spilled out while I rooted about like a little dog looking for the bone he had buried--

"My eye!" giggled Mabel reminescently, "didn't I get it good for that!"

* * * * *

November 24, 1918

Mabel Normand

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

...I went over to the Biograph studio [in 1910]. Griffith put me to work at once. They gave me a pair of tights and a page's costume which terrified me almost out of my wits. I had never worn tights before and it seemed to me that everybody around the place had nothing to do but stare at my legs. What was more, they kept me there until 12:30 and I didn't get home to Staten Island until nearly 2. So I did not go back the next day and they were furious. I met Mack Sennett on the street a few days later and he said; "That was a terrible thing you did to Griffith, not going back." I didn't understand that I was to be in another scene or what it meant.

But eventually Griffith sent for me and I worked regularly for the Biograph.

...When Mack Sennett first came to me [in 1912] and said: "How would you like to make \$100 a week?" I said, "Stop making fun of me--don't be ridiculous." And when he took me to Kessell and Baumann and they said they

liked my looks, I asked if they intended to pay me \$100 a week and they said, "Well, call it \$125."

You may believe me or not, but when I got that contract in my hands I walked in a daze from Union Square to Times Square and back. Every five blocks I would read it again. I couldn't believe it. I took it to Alice Joyce in the Park Avenue Hotel and showed it to her. We both decided that it meant \$25 a week and that the figure 1 was a joke.

I worked at the Keystone with Mack Sennett for several years. Charlie Chaplin joined the company after a while. In fact, I was responsible for his coming into pictures. I saw him one night at Hammerstein's Victoria and went straight out and telegraphed Sennett to get him.

* * * * *

November 19, 1921

Maurice Costello

MOVIE WEEKLY

Mabel Normand came to play bits for Vitagraph from the old Biograph company, as did Lottie Pickford. Mabel, Lottie, and Lillian Walker were three tomboy pals who were always up to some sort of mischief. When you wanted them for a scene you would be sure to find them up a cherry tree in a nearby orchard throwing twigs at each other and cutting up for all their worth.

* * * * *

May 14, 1921

Flora Finch

MOVIE WEEKLY

Those early days at the Vitagraph were indeed happy ones. Mabel Normand came just about the time I did. She was a lovable youngster, always up to mischief, the perpetrator of more than one practical joke that sent everyone into paroxysms of laughter. Mabel and Lillian Walker were the Damon and Pythias of comedy. One a brunette; the other a blonde. They always considered that they scored an ace when one made the other laugh at an inauspicious moment.

I remember that one day Lillian was playing in a serious scene. The

director rehearsed it several times. Then, everything set, he ordered the camera to grind. For some unknown reason, Lillian turned her head. There was a squeak; she doubled up with mirth, and simply shrieked. The director raving furiously at having a perfectly good scene spoiled, turned around, but didn't see anything. Of course he didn't. The mischief maker had disappeared. It had been Mabel, dressed in a clown costume, face white-washed, nose black, lips reddened to extend from ear to ear, eyes penciled to slant upwards. There she had stood, grimacing and prancing about. Lillian turned around, saw this unexpected sight, and...pandemonium!

* * * * *

May 20, 1916

MOTOGRAPHY

Miss Normand couldn't tell which comedy she thought most humorous on the screen, but she was not for a moment in doubt about the "most fun she ever had in pictures."

"Working with Raymond Hitchcock in 'My Valet' made up for all the hardships. I think I laughed straight through the 'water stuff.' Fred Mace was the villain. He took me out to a rock in the sea and tied me there. But he was so afraid of the water that he was in terror the whole time, I believe. And at last the current was so strong it swept him away, and we all had to turn in and rescue the frightened 'villyan.'"

* * * * *

April 1916

Randolph Bartlett

PHOTOPLAY

"Why have you never been killed," I asked her, with the utmost of sincerity.

"Why haven't I? Why--I have. I guess you don't read the Los Angeles newspapers."

"But it wasn't permanent."

"That didn't make it any better while it lasted," the fair Mabel insisted.

"How did it happen?"

"Roscoe [Fatty Arbuckle] sat on my head by mistake. I was unconscious for twelve days, and laid up for three months. Don't talk to me about being killed--I've been through it," and Mabel's eyes took upon themselves that dreamy, distant gaze you read about. I think she was offering up a little prayer of thanks for being alive, as I know I always should, if Roscoe Arbuckle sat on my head and I lived to talk about it.

"But that was your only serious death in all your adventures, thus far?"

"Yes, but I just live along from day to day. I never make any plans. Nobody in the world lives up to the literal instruction, 'Take no thought for the morrow,' like I do. What's the use of making plans to go places or marry people, when like as not you will have to write a note saying, 'Excuse me. I did want to become your blushing bride today, but it's no go. I was killed yesterday doing a high dive into a tank of brickbats.'"

"Then you're always afraid you are going to be killed, when you have a rough stunt to handle?"

"Afraid?" and Mabel was daintily angry. "Who said anything about being afraid? I'm usually in too big a hurry to be scared, but I just absolutely know I am going to be killed. When I come through alive I am so surprised that I feel quite sure it isn't myself at all, and want to be introduced to the woman that's hanging around in my clothes."

* * * * *

August 1918

Randolph Bartlett

PHOTOPLAY

When she was making farce comedies with Roscoe Arbuckle, Miss Normand became known among the players as the most fearless girl in pictures, when there were dangerous stunts to be performed. Nobody ever "doubled" for her. With all her slenderness and petit grace, she had the will power to go through with anything she attempted. She couldn't bear to be called a quitter. A typical incident occurred just when she recovered from a long illness that kept her away from work all summer, two years ago.

Just before she was laid up, she had been working on the comedy "Fatty and Mabel Adrift," and it had to remain unfinished until her recovery. At last she felt able to go back to the studio, and started out in her car. As she neared Edendale her nerve began to ooze away.

"I can't do it--I can't," she groaned, and ordered the chauffeur to turn back.

Before she had driven back many blocks, she began to call herself a coward.

"You've got to do it," she kept repeating to herself. "You've got to do it."

So the chauffeur was ordered to turn again toward the studio. Three times she ordered him to drive back home, and as many times her Irish blood rose at the thought of submitting to her fear, until at last she fairly whipped herself to her dressing room--and finished the picture.

* * * * *

February 13, 1916
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The Morning Telegraph representative then asked Miss Normand if she thought it was hard for a pretty woman to be a success in film comedy.

"Yes," she answered. "Most pretty girls who go into comedy work are content to be merely pretty. But the great difficulty is to put character into acting without either distorting your face or using comedy make up. Anyone who photographs well can walk on a scene and flirt with the comedian, which is all that most good looking girls are required to do in comedies. It takes very little ability on their part for all they have to do is follow direction. (And here Miss Normand gave an imitation of a comedy coquette flirting according to the commands of her director.) But to make a farce heroine more than a mere doll, you must think out the situation yourself and above all you must pay great attention to every little detail in a scene. The little bits of business that seem insignificant are what make good comedy."

* * * * *

December 1922

Norbert Lusk

PICTURE-PLAY

...Many persons know Mabel Normand. She welcomes acquaintances as easily as she curves her cupid's bow with a lipstick; but few can say they truly know her. This gives me a proper opening to say that I do. That is, my knowledge is enough to make me fond. It is no new happiness.

Five years ago [in 1917], when she was made a Goldwyn star, the prospect of meeting mellifuous Mabel was quite enough to give me tremors of anticipation, even though I was no younger than I ought to have been. Not only was she on the crest of the glory that was Goldwyn, but her name sparkled with reminiscent associations. Years before, when she was a mere anonymity--her eloquent eyes and sure sense of fun had won my interest in Biograph and Vitagraph comedies, the latter with John Bunny. As a tantalizing typist in a one-reel comedy I remembered her sidelong glances and saucy scorn. I knew meeting Mabel Normand would not be dull routine. It wasn't by a long shot dull.

"I haven't time. I'm too busy. Later, maybe." She flung out this hope when accosted, red-cloaked, in the studio corridor, where I had been sent to worm from her information to be used in advertising her pictures. Then she passed on, leaving me to make the best of her retreat, to exclaim at her diminutiveness and startling big eyes. But the tide of defeat turned in the studio restaurant where, fortunately, I had sought reviving tea. She came in with Mae Marsh and danced toward me, an old friend.

Then began an "interview" which she made absurdly comic when led on by my puerile queries.

Q. "What do you like best to do?"

A. "Pinch babies and twist their legs. (Don't dare publish this. People wouldn't understand.)"

Q. "What do you most enjoy?"

A. "Dark windy days when trees break and houses blow down."

Q. "Favorite flower?"

A. "Weeds--if I buy them myself. Orchids otherwise. (But I'll take

anything.)"

Q. "Ideal man?"

A. "A brutal Irishman who chews tobacco and lets the world know it. (Say a Gibson man. It's more refined.)"

Q. Favorite food?"

A. "Chocolate cake, iced and inch high. (Fat or no fat, I love it)"

This went on, broken by Mabel's effervescing giggles. On November tenth Mabel was given such a birthday cake as she hungered for and thanked me fervidly, rapturously, like a child. She said she'd rather have had it than a pint of pearls. Be that as it may, the chocolate cake made us friends, though when she reads this she'll call it slanderling her finer feelings. She'll protest the cake had nothing to do with it. She's a great kidder.

It is this habit that stands in the way of understanding her. She jests at all times. When she becomes serious she finds, to her discomfiture, that she is still laughed at. For her attempts at gravity are likely to be mirthful to others. I have never met any one more incorrigibly prankish, nor more high-spirited and volatile. Naturally the sympathies of such a person are easily roused and, when one is as generous as Mabel, lavishly expressed. She spends money with the superb gesture of a runaway youngster playing hookey from school...

Experienced actress that she is, Mabel is more than all heart. Her grasp and understanding of her work are too strong and sure to be the promptings of anything but her brain. Left to herself her choice of a story would be reasonably certain to please her public equally as her bright imagination is in devising "business." She has virtually grown up with the movies and brings to her work the capability, deft, expert, of a veteran artist. After a single reading of an involved scenario I have seen her run over the entire story, embellishing here and there an incident that seemed to need more of the comic, or advising her laughing director how to strengthen the whole. Then whirling round to quip a passer-by or indulge in burlesque mimicry of a star whose back was turned.

* * * * *

April 28, 1918

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The appearances of screen stars in the interests of the Liberty Loan drive are becoming more frequent as the need for patriotic response grows greater, but rarely has an idol of the cinema faced an audience under more exciting circumstances than marked the visit of Mabel Normand to the Harlem Grand Theatre last Sunday night.

The house was filled. Manager Arthur Hirsch estimated the attendance to be 4,000. John Case, representing the Forty-third District of the Liberty Loan Committee, announced that Mabel Normand, star in Goldwyn pictures, had consented to appear.

Then Mr. Case delivered his appeal and Miss Normand was the first to answer, subscribing for a \$5,000 bond. Her reward for this was cheers, after which a few subscriptions for smaller amounts came in. Eight-year-old Clarice Boehm sang a patriotic song and a few more hundred dollars came from the audience. But it was not until Miss Normand seized upon a better method of coaxing money from the audience that expectations were realized:

"Ladies and gentlemen," she cried, "if it means anything at all to you, I will give any one who subscribes for a bond of any amount--a kiss!"

Mr. Hirsch and his assistants found difficulty in averting a panic, the noise of these eager to see and those eager to be kissed adding to the pandemonium. Finally some semblance of order was restored and the resourceful Miss Normand was held to her bargain. Never mind how many osculations were the price she paid, nor how many cheers, cries and whistles punctuated each kiss. The result is more important. Twelve thousand five hundred dollars was the total, all the more notable when it is remembered that the amount, except for the star's initial \$5,000, represented the savings of people of modest means.

* * * * *

November 3, 1918

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The principal attraction at the Victory Workers' rally at the Manhattan

Opera House Saturday afternoon was Mabel Normand. Miss Normand's function at the rally was principally decorative and sympathetic. The speech she made was distinguished for its brevity. What she said was as follows:

"There is nothing more out of my line than making a speech. I don't think I could ever have got up the courage to stand up here in this terrifying place and talk right out in meeting if this cause didn't mean so terribly much to me that I simply have to say what is next to my heart in this matter.

"You see, it has been brought home to me in the most intimate and personal way. I have a brother 'over there.' A brother who is more to me than anybody else in the world. Strangely enough--for I am told it doesn't always happen in even the best regulated families--we are very fond of each other. He is the best brother I ever saw.

"Now, every letter I get from him is full of stories of the wonderful work that is being done 'over there' by the Y.M.C.A., the Salvation Army and the allied organizations--I don't like to call them charities, because the service they are doing is so much higher than what we usually mean by charity. My brother tells me he doesn't know what on earth they would do if it weren't for all these organizations that are working heart and soul to bring a little comfort and happiness to the boys.

"I am not asking you to do anything I wouldn't do myself. I am in this drive with everything I've got of energy and money. Every one of you here has a brother, a father, or a friend somewhere in France. It is for us he has gone to the front. It is for us that he is going through what can be described as nothing less than hell. And the least we can do is to go to the front for them in this drive. To work like beavers to get this \$170,000,000 not only subscribed but oversubscribed.

"This is our chance, the chance for all of us to show how much we love and thank the lads who are over there for us, fighting for us, for your freedom and mine, to show how much we appreciate their love and sacrifices.

"And remember, first, last and all the time, that every dollar we raise is going to make somebody near and dear to us happy, to cut a little off his

loneliness, his discomforts and his hardships."

* * * * *

November 3, 1918

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Mabel Normand delights in playing jokes on those who understand her. Her mother, who lives on Staten Island, was the victim of the frolicsome Goldwyn star's latest prank. Miss Normand's limousine drove up not far from the Normand home the other day and out stepped a little old woman. In an unsteady voice she asked to see the lady of the house, and on being received by Mabel Normand's mother, quavered a request for old pies "for the war sufferers, madam." A moment of embarrassed silence followed, whereupon Mabel dashed off her wig and goggles and leaped into her mother's arms.

* * * * *

July 1922

Herb Howe

PHOTOPLAY

The appointment for an interview was made for an afternoon. Mabel declared she would be delighted to have "a good talk." Now it is a well-known fact that Mabel Normand of all stars cares the least about publicity. She is renowned for her ability to elude personal appearances, photographers, interviewers and all that pertains to publicity. Yet such is the vanity of man that he always makes an exception of himself. Besides, Mabel had seemed so enthusiastically gracious. I arrived at Mabel's home at the hour designated. Mabel had gone to the studio. I went to the studio. Mabel had gone home. I went to her home. Mabel had not returned. I 'phoned the next day. I 'phoned regularly every day for a week.

Mabel was always out. I seriously considered sending her a phonograph record of "Home, Sweet Home." Finally I caught her on the wire. Before I had a chance to demand an explanation, she cried--

"Why, where have you been? I've been trying and trying to get you-- 'phoning and 'phoning--when are you coming to see me?

Quite overcome by this coup d'etat, I murmured weakly, "Any time."

"Tomorrow morning--can you make it early?" she cried eagerly.

I acquiesced with the feeling that Mabel would pace the floor, sleepless, until I had arrived.

The next morning, after I had shaved with abnormal care, Mabel's secretary 'phoned to say that Mabel had been called away on urgent matters. Would I make the appointment for the studio the following day at eleven?

I was at the studio at eleven. I waited--and waited. For two hours I waited. All the while I plotted what I would say as I stalked out, leaving her an uninterviewed and stricken woman.

Finally I espied her through the window. She was humming to herself as she leisurely strolled past the door of the publicity office in the direction of her dressing room. The publicity man, in high confusion, rushed out to tell her that I was waiting. She looked surprised, as though the visit were totally unexpected. Then she turned and entered the room. At the threshold she paused, regarding me silently with a wide-eyed innocence. Without taking her eyes off my glowering countenance she moved solemnly toward me, then stopped short--

"Kiss me!" she commanded.

As I showed signs of rallying, she swiftly changed the order to--

"Let's have some pie and coca-cola--I'm hungry, aren't you?"

* * * * *

July 1919

MOTION PICTURE

Of all the nutty news of the month, the prize goes to the announcement that Mabel Normand has installed a peanut-roaster in her dressing room.

* * * * *

September 12, 1919

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Mabel Normand, the vivacious Goldwyn star, is so full of brightness, music and joy that she demands something to go with her temperament. Monday the Schertzing company went on location to Victorville, but no sooner had they traveled two hours than Miss Normand asked "Paw" Schertzing, her

director, where the band was.

"Band?" queried he, "what band do you mean, Maw?"

"Why, our own company band--where is our music for this trip?"

"We did not order a band--there is no dancing to be done."

"But I want a band," Miss Normand pouted prettily, "and you know it will be nice to have at the little hotel, too--besides, we can always work better."

The finish showed Director Schertzinger sending a telegram back to the studio, and, although he had rather a doubtful expression on his jovial face, he remarked, "Guess they'll send it, for she has always had one with her--and, goodness knows, she needs something to go with her joyful spirit."

* * * * *

November 18, 1919

Ray Frohman

LOS ANGELES HERALD

[from an interview with Mabel Normand]: "How old am I? Aw, I'm not a hundred and five!"

* * * * *

February 15, 1922

Marie Prevost

OAKLAND POST-ENQUIRER

Nobody ever hears of the wonderful things Mabel Normand does. It is only when she innocently gets into difficulties that people hear of her life in any way. Mabel is the most generous creature in the world and she is always doing things for other people. Why, I remember one day I was driving with her through the poorer districts of Los Angeles. We passed a house where a landlord was putting a mother and her five little children out of their home because the rent was not paid.

You should have heard the things that Mabel told that man. And what do you suppose she did? Dumped all the money she had in her bag into that mother's lap and gave the owner a check for three months' rent.

That's the sort of a girl Mabel is, and I just wish everybody knew it.

* * * * *

February 1920

Delight Evans

PHOTOPLAY

"Happiness," said Mabel, "is simply a state of mind. I've never lost my mind. When things go wrong with you--kid yourself."

* * * * *

February 3, 1922

GARY POST-TRIBUNE

"Music," Mabel Normand says, "will do anything to me. If I come to the studio feeling particularly upstage and patrician--I suppose there is such a feeling as patrician?--the sound of a little tough music will set my heart to jigging, my feel to wiggling and my pulses to jumping. In a trice, I am lifted out of my ladylike languor into the person the music is talking about. The minuet-ty type of melody has just the opposite effect. Right away it slows me down, puts my best manners in place, and there I am--a perfect lady."

Which is why, out of the album of what she calls her "mood music," pretty Mabel chose "When Francis Dances With Me" to be played while she made "Molly-O," her new First National picture.

So they played "Francis" for three months while Mabel made "Molly." "I never tired of it once," says Mabel. "It was the best director I ever had."

* * * * *

February 25, 1922

MOVIE WEEKLY

I once asked a studio official if the company ever had trouble with Mabel Normand. I had in mind her way of eluding engagements.

He was a hard-boiled individual, who bows to no star, and he looked me straight in the eye.

"If anyone has trouble with Mabel Normand," said he, "he is to blame for it. But I cannot imagine anyone finding fault with her."

While we were chatting, a gentleman called by appointment with the star.

He did certain work for her. She was unable to see him because she was having her hair dressed. But she sent down a charming note of apology and enclosed a signed check asking him to fill it out for whatever amount she owed him!

* * * * *

February 5, 1922

Edward Doherty

NEW YORK NEWS

Mabel Normand likes to go to parties with the fellows of the film, and many a party she has enlivened by her wish for "horseback rides."

"Mabel wants horsebackie rides," she'll say and climb up on the back of a willing friend, to be ridden around the cafe, shouting, singing, laughing, waving her arms. Great times when Mabel's around.

* * * * *

November 27, 1921

Edwin Schallert

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Mabel said, "You see, I don't like Ritzy people. You know what I mean. And as for people in general I either like them or I don't. If I do, I can act like I like them. And if I don't--well, I can't bother about them--"

Mabel Normand was, I felt, defining herself. I was conscious also that it would be highly unsatisfactory to be classed among the Ritzy people. The nearest equivalent is "full of airs."

"I don't believe in all this bally-hoo stuff about art," she remarked. "You know what I mean. This saying that I am thus and so, and when I was in London I met so and so, and oh-er-ah my art, my art, my art!

"If a person is a real artist he doesn't care to talk about it. He's too sensitive about it to let it really be known. Art makes people sensitive, the greatest thoughts you feel you can only express through your art, and you have less to say outside of your art all the time about your art."

A rather keen defining of the artist that, for a girl who loves to fling slang words at an astonished hearer, and who is the life of a party through her capricious gayety.

* * * * *

February 20, 1922

Adela Rogers St. Johns

BOSTON ADVERTISER

[Mabel Normand visited William Desmond Taylor shortly before he was murdered on February 1, 1922.] I talked with Mabel Normand last night over the long-distance telephone between here and Los Angeles.

Her voice haunted me all night. She was crying. Her nurses didn't want her to talk, but she wanted to ask me if I believed she had anything to do with the Taylor murder, if anybody back here believed it?

And I told her what I believed, that no one connected her with it, no one believed she had done anything that had any connection with the shooting. And I told her that I loved her and for her to take care of herself. Mabel's health is not good. Doctor's verdicts last year were discouraging--and no one can make Mabel take proper care of herself.

* * * * *

February 14, 1923

SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

(New York)--Feb. 13--"Ooh, but he's adorable. No. I won't tell who he is, what or where he is. Ooh, but he's grand." and Mabel Normand, vivacious screen comedienne hugged the two nearest reporters to whom she was announcing that she was married. It happened when Miss Normand arrived today from England on the White Star liner Baltic.

Mabel didn't intend to tell a soul about it. It was only when a newspaperman noticed a diamond-studded, platinum wedding ring on her finger that the secret was out.

"Oh, I should have kept my glove on," cried the blushing Mabel, "and then I would not have let you fellows in on the secret."

When the reporters resumed their questioning she said:

"Ah, I was only kidding. Gosh, I'm so glad to be back home. I was only fooling. I'm not married. Honest."

And then she chirruped: "Come on, cheer up, fellows. I'm so happy over

being married. I just hate to see you looking like funerals."

Then followed affirmations and denials, the last being a sweeping denial that she was married.

* * * * *

February 1924

Herb Howe

PHOTOPLAY

Mabel Normand is another charmer of child-naturalness who is instantly ensnaring to men. She is an unbelievable combination of gamin and angel. And, curiously, the demon never seems to affect the deity in the least. She is the angel child of the song: When she is good she is very, very good, and when she is bad she is very good company.

I attended a dinner party which Mabel graced. Among the guests was an icy dowager who simply refused to melt. Suddenly Mabel looked across at her and cried, "I'll bite you, baby!" The dowager collapsed.

I don't believe there ever was created a more sincere, unselfish mortal than Mabel Normand. She is that exalted type of feminine charmer who can give a man friendship in lieu of love and still make him feel a triumphant Lothario.

* * * * *

January 3, 1924

Edward Doherty

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

(Los Angeles)--Jan. 2--Mabel Normand and Edna Purviance, movie stars, who were present when Mabel's chauffeur shot Edna's sweetheart, Courtland S. Dines, last night, will have to tell their stories to the police at least once more.

...An unvoiced, passionate love for his "movie queen" employer and jealousy of her host is believed by the police to have caused Horace A. Greer, the driver, to shoot Dines.

But Mabel herself objects strenuously to this view;

"A chauffeur with a gun!" she said tonight. "Deliver me."

Mabel was more articulate today but not so full of pep. Her fingers trembled a little as she lit a cigarette. She had just been reading the newspapers and the police version of the affair seemed to anger her.

"Blah, blah," said Mabel. "Slush, the poor boob was nuts. He was only one of the servants, and he was treated like one. Why, I didn't even treat him like--well I've had a lot of good chauffeurs. And good gawd, I didn't even hire this egg. My secretary did that."

Some one asked Mabel about the gat.

"Well my gawd," she said, "I didn't know how he had it. He says he got it out of my room. What business had he in my room--my bedroom? Say, I hope I drop dead if this ain't the truth--that man had been in my room only twice that I know of--once to fix my curler and once to fix an electric plug. Honest.

"Somebody gave me that gat to shoot bottles with. I broke a lot of nice mountains shooting at bottles, but I had a lot of fun. And he says I was in the room when he cut loose with the gat, and he wasn't shooting at bottles, either. I wasn't in the room at all. I was in Edna's room. She was putting on her evening gown and it wasn't hooked up and I didn't want this egg to see her.

"Then all of a sudden, bang, bang, bang. I thought they were firecrackers. The kind I used to throw at Ben Turpin. Poor old Ben, he'd look at me so funny."

Mabel tried to give an imitation of Ben doing the east and west and nearly strangled on cigarette smoke....

* * * * *

"The Humor of a Hollywood Murder", Part 7

The Kidnapping of Henry Peavey

February 22, 1922

Astounding charges that Henry Peavey, negro servant of William D. Taylor, murdered motion-picture director, was held prisoner for nearly twelve hours in the office of the Los Angeles Examiner, and that Examiner reporters late at night took Peavey to the tomb of Taylor, where they attempted to bully and terrorize him by confronting him with a "ghost," were made last night by Dist.-Atty. Woolwine, who characterized the Examiner's actions as "presumptuous, dangerous and dastardly."

The energetic denunciation of Examiner tactics by Mr. Woolwine followed a long conference between the District Attorney and William F. Eldridge, managing editor of the Examiner, who went to Mr. Woolwine's office on the eleventh floor of the Hall of Records.

Mr. Eldridge was preceded in the District Attorney's office by Peavey, who related in detail the asserted offenses of the Examiner's representatives. Twelve typewritten pages comprised Peavey's statement to the District Attorney.

He said that two men came to his room before noon last Sunday and asked him to come out.

"I am not doing any talking to newspaper reporters"--Peavey said he informed the pair. One of the men, he said, replied: "Newspaper reporters? We are not newspaper reporters; we are officers from New York and we have authority to come down here and get you and have you go over your statements, and we want you to go down to the Examiner office and answer one question."

Peavey said that he asked them to tell him what question he was to be asked, but that they said they did not know, adding, he said, "there's \$1000 in it for you."

Instead of taking him direct to the Examiner office, however, he said, one of the men announced, "It is a beautiful day and we will drive around for awhile."

He says he got into an automobile with the men and was driven through Hollywood and through the cemetery where Mr. Taylor's body lies. Returning, he says, the automobile picked up another man at the Alexandria and then

proceeded to the Examiner office.

Upon arriving there, according to Peavey, "we went in and a gentleman asked me what movie man it was in Hollywood that was paying me to keep my mouth shut, and I looked at him and said, 'Nobody has ever given me a penny for anything excepting this gentleman here, who gave me \$10.' " This money, Peavey said, was handed to him during his automobile ride Sunday afternoon.

Peavey told the District Attorney that he was kept waiting for some time in the Examiner office and that he asked to be permitted to get something to eat, whereupon, he stated, one of the men said, "No, we will send out and buy you some." He described the supper brought into the Examiner for him and said that after further questioning he was taken to Hollywood by the three Examiner reporters.

He said the Examiner men referred several times to a spiritualist who would, according to his story of their assertions, cause him to talk with Mr. Taylor's spirit.

His remarkable story of the appearance of the Examiner's "ghost" and the fiasco that ensued is taken from the transcript of his testimony on file in Mr. Woolwine's office.

"They drove into the cemetery and said, 'Gee; goodness! it makes me nervous to drive into a cemetery at night. How do you feel, Henry?' I replied, 'It doesn't bother me.' They drove up to the vault where Mr. Taylor was lying. They said, 'Turn quick.' They turned the car and all the lights went out to make it dark.

"I got out of the car and walked over to the vault and just as I got there a man walked out from behind the vault with a white sheet over him and they said, 'Look! look! look! there is Taylor!'[1]

"I stood and looked at him and he commenced to make some funny noises and dropped down and got me around the feet and commenced groaning. They kept trying to make me run, and I wouldn't run, and said:

" 'What in the hell are you guys trying to make out of me anyway, a fool?' "

Peavey related that a further attempt to intimidate him was made by the

Examiner last night, but that he paid no attention to his asserted tormentors.

Mr. Woolwine's statement denouncing the Examiner follows:

"Henry Peavey, the negro servant of William D. Taylor, deceased, who has shown a very deep and genuine grief over the murder of Mr. Taylor, and who has at all times given the authorities every assistance in his power in their effort to unravel the mystery of the murder, and who has held himself ready to respond to repeated calls by the officers for such information as he could give, was taken from his room by a pair of conscienceless blackguards who represented themselves to be officers of the law, and held a prisoner from noon until about midnight on last Sunday. During this imprisonment, he was subjected to the most outrageous treatment. He was held for hours in the office of the Los Angeles Examiner, not even being permitted to leave the premises to get necessary food when he became hungry.

"To add to the unspeakable injustice of this high-handed procedure, he was conveyed to the cemetery by night by these two scoundrels, who first took him from his room, and another rascal who joined them, was taken to the tomb of his former employer and every effort made to bully and terrorize him.

"It should be remembered that this man, Peavey, had been subjected to the most searching examination, not only by the District Attorney's office, but by the skilled officers of the Los Angeles Police Department of many years' experience in the detection of crime. He has at all times shown the utmost anxiety and eagerness in his effort to render to the duly constituted authorities every assistance possible. It is regrettable that the District Attorney has no jurisdiction over the offense committed by these miscreants for the false imprisonment of this witness. I have not been able as yet to ascertain their names, but if I knew them, and had such jurisdiction, they would be in jail tonight.

"It seems that this witness's only offense is that he is a simple-minded colored man, who has little knowledge of his real rights as an American citizen and can neither read nor write. This presumptuous, dangerous and dastardly interference by a newspaper with the orderly course of procedure by

the duly constituted authorities, is calculated to and does so terrorize good and well-meaning people that they, for their own protection, keep secret important facts that might lead to the discovery to the perpetrators of foul crimes. Such acts are a positive menace to the people at large.

"I feel it my duty as District Attorney of Los Angeles County, to expose such vile, cowardly and unlawful practices, for the perpetrators of which every decent citizen should feel a most supreme and utter contempt."

Odds & Ends

February 18, 1922

MIAMI HERALD

We have been feeling a little guilty recently ever since we said that the movies were not true to life. We really didn't expect that our words would have such an immediate effect on Hollywood, Cal., that they would feel it necessary to make their lives true to movies.

* * * * *

February 17, 1922

H. I. Phillips

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

On the Hollywood Grill

Prosecutor: Now go on and tell us all about it.

Movie Actress: There really is nothing much to tell. I had simply dropped in to borrow a copy of the Fireman's Weekly Herald. We were both very literary. We talked a short time, and then I got into my sedan and went home. Somehow I felt uneasy and I went back to the bungalow. As I entered it I saw Bartholomew in a heap on the floor. An overturned piano rested on his chest and there was a bookcase across his neck.

Prosecutor: Whadja do then?

Movie Actress: Nothing. It didn't strike me as suspicious at first. Bartholomew was often that way when I called!

Prosecutor: Often that way?

Movie Actress: Well, I mean he was often in a heap on the floor, although I don't recall that he ever had the furniture scattered over him before. So, not thinking anything of it, I sat down on the floor and tried to talk to him. He didn't answer. Then I shook him, and when he didn't respond I began to think something was wrong.

Prosecutor: You finally became suspicious?

Movie Actress: Yeah. I think it was the way the furniture was arranged over him. Suddenly the thought flashed over me that he had been a victim of violence!

Prosecutor: Then whadja do?

Movie Actress: I rushed out on to the front porch and cried for help.

Prosecutor: Did anybody answer?

Movie Actress: Why, er, it was most peculiar; there were six other bungalows in the block and there was a movie actress on the front porch of each one yelling for help, too. I shouted, "Oh, girls, my director has been murdered!"

Prosecutor: What'd they say?

Movie Actress: They all yelled back, "So has mine!"

Prosecutor: Then whadja do?

Movie Actress: We all got together, and I found all the girls had had exactly the same experience I had.

Prosecutor: Didn't that strike you as unusual?

Movie Actress: Well, it was the first time we'd ever had six crimes in the same block on the same night.

Prosecutor: Did you see anybody else in the neighborhood?

Movie Actress: I saw a stout man in a cap and muffler looking around the lawn of a hotel across the street.

Prosecutor: What was he doing?

Movie Actress: At first I thought he might have been connected with the slayings, but I later found he was a prominent screen comedian and knew nothing about them.

Prosecutor: What was he looking around the lawn for?

Movie Actress: It seems he had been giving a little dinner party in the hotel and had thrown a young lady guest out of the window in a playful mood. He was trying to find her when I saw him.

Prosecutor: I have been told by my detectives that a large motor truck was in the vicinity immediately after the shootings. Did you see it?

Movie Actress: Oh, yes, indeedy.

Prosecutor: What was it doing there?

Movie Actress: Must I tell?

Prosecutor: Yes, it may have an important bearing on the case.

Movie Actress: Well, we girls sent for it to come and cart our letters away.

(Curtain as the prosecutor collapses.)

* * * * *

February 15, 1922

Mae Tinee

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

"Tillie?" Yes, we've seen "Tillie"--featuring Mary Miles Minter--and it was sickening, entering the theater to see how many people were NOT there to witness the photoplay but to gape at Mary with morbid eyes, eager to discover in the lovely face that had charmed them so many times, signs of dissoluteness.

* * * * *

February 17, 1922

VARIETY

The Taylor murder is proving costly to practically all coast production companies at this time. Star, director and cameraman have been busily engaged in the discussion of the case each morning at a time they are scheduled to "shoot." It is safe to say an hour or two were wasted daily last week on all of the bigger lots as the result of the "post mortem" the Los Angeles dailies were holding over the character of the slain man.

* * * * *

February 12, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

(Chicago)--Solomon Fink read aloud to his family last night newspaper dispatches describing diamonds and automobiles owned by the motion picture folk of Hollywood. Two hours later a patrolman found Herman Fink, 5, and Mollie Fischer, 4, a neighbor's child, wandering hand in hand through the Northwestern Railway Station. The children told the patrolman, "We are going to Hollywood, where all the rich people live."

* * * * *

February 20, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

Blonde Killed Taylor, Says Psychoanalyst

(New York)--"If a woman murdered William Desmond Taylor, she was a blonde," says Dr. Andre Tridon, eminent psychoanalyst.

Dr. Tridon, interviewed at his home today on aspects of the Taylor slaying, explained:

"The adrenal gland, a small gland located above the kidneys, is the physical center of the soul-differences between blondes and brunettes. In blondes this gland has a large center and a thin covering or cortex. The center of the gland makes excretions as a result of fear, and the covering makes an excretion of anger. The blonde has more fear and less anger than the brunette. It is a simple matter of physical fact.

"In the case of a man who is shot in the back, evidently from ambush or by an unseen assailant, it is almost dead certain that the woman who did it, if it was a woman, had blonde hair and a fair complexion. A brunette, being more violent in temperament, would have faced the man she killed in order to have the violent pleasure of letting him know she was doing it.

"This does not mean that blondes are less emotional than brunettes. There is no law, physical or psychological, to regulate the emotions. I mean only that blondes are less violent than brunettes.

"The dark peoples of the earth, moved by tremendous angers and passions, are the people who use knives and like to get a close quarters with their

victims when they go out to kill.

"If a brunette had committed the Taylor murder she might have used a stiletto, or knife of some kind. At any rate, she would have faced him and shot while he realized what she was doing. The brunette demands actual contact with the object of her love or hate."

* * * * *

February 26, 1922

Louella Parsons

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Social Requirements

If one is invited to dine or to luncheon, or to tea outside the industry one is expected to have at least one original idea on who murdered Taylor. At first it was rather a shock to have someone say:

"Oh come, you know all the inside dope, tell me."

Not having had any previous experience with unraveling murder mysteries and not being a graduate of a Sherlock Holmes school it was something of a blow to be prepared to given an explanation of who killed the most talked of man in the country.

To our earnest, "Really I did not know Mr. Taylor. I have no idea who could have killed him," we have been met with suspicious looks and a manner as if we were concealing some of the inside facts.

But every one else in the motion picture industry has had the same experience. To be connected with motion pictures in any way is enough to make the layman believe one should know more than State's Attorney Woolwine and the men who are unraveling this murder mystery.

* * * * *

February 28, 1922

CHICAGO POST

Now that the road of financial success starts with pre-eminence in federal politics, and the movie magnates select their sergeants-major from the available supply of national postmasters-general, we may expect the converse of the rule to take effect and the people's rulers to be taken from

the amusement field:

PILLAR NOMINATION

For Postmaster-General, to succeed Will Hays, we nominate:

MISS MARY MILES MINTER

* * * * *

February 10, 1922

WICHITA EAGLE

"Mary Miles Minter is as clean and lovable a girl as is on earth," declared L. D. Balsly, publicity manager for the Wichita Theater. "The only successful films she was in were directed by Taylor, so why should she not have admired him?"

* * * * *

June 10, 1922

Karl Kitchen

LITERARY DIGEST

(reprinted from NEW YORK WORLD)

Just as an oil-well may be described as a hole in the ground owned by a liar, Hollywood may be described as a collection of bungalows and motion-picture studios written about by liars.

It is an actual fact that more lies have been written about this dreary, desolate suburb of Los Angeles than any other part of California.

Hollywood is in no sense a city. It has no local government, no art galleries, no museums, no institutions of learning aside from primary schools and kindergartens--nothing that makes the slightest pretense to culture--civic or otherwise.

Its only restaurants are cafeterias--self-serve tooth and jaw gymnasiums where it is as fashionable to use a toothpick in public as it is to leave the spoon in one's cup. It doesn't boast of a single theater except the cheapest movie playhouses.

There are no evidences of any life--wicked or of the night variety--anywhere within its precincts. If in the daytime more than two people walk abreast on Hollywood or Sunset Boulevards--broad avenues that lead nowhere--

the inhabitants mistake them for a parade. In fact, no inmate of this quiet suburb leaves his home after sundown except, perhaps, to buy an evening paper.

My own theory is that William Desmond Taylor committed suicide rather than remain in Hollywood another fortnight.

February 15, 1922

Neal O'Hara

NEW YORK EVENING WORLD

Hollywood Notes

A consignment of seventy-two deaf and dumb men arrived in Hollywood yesterday to serve as chauffeurs.

* *

A delightful informal party of the upper screen set was enjoyed at the Mussey bungalow last evening. Games were played and frolicking indulged in till an early morning hour, when a ride in the patrol wagon was enjoyed by all.

* *

Eustace Gwick has been signed to play the role of Morphine in the new super-hypo-photoplay, "Ten Nights in a Drug Store." Genevieve Sickle will play the part of the Heroin.

* *

Police report a new clue in the Hollywood murder mystery. Can of alphabet soup has been found in mystery bungalow, containing initials from A to Z, inclusive. Every film staress in the colony denies the can of soup is hers.

* *

Members of the Hollywood set are enjoying sleigh riding this winter.

* *

Markdown sale of pink nighties, initialed handkerchiefs and other incriminating lingerie at Blitz Brothers' Dept. Store, Hollywood. Closing out a fine line of goods owing to unexpected lack of demand.

* *

Mudington Frizz, the well known hop lover, is having his arm
revulcanized.

* *

Reformers at Venice, Cal, urge that film bathing girls be kept out of
the water. Claim gals are giving the Pacific Ocean a bad name.

* *

POSITION WANTED--Butler with wide experience and closed mouth wants
position in reliable bungalow. Best of references, tongue-tied and eyesight
poor. Also skilled as buyer of ladies' wear.

* *

Winnie Whoozis, petit favorite of the screen, admits making X's on mash
note, but claims she thought it was Australian ballot. Election officials
have been called in.

* * * * *

February 24, 1922

William Parker

SAN FRANCISCO BULLETIN

My friend said to me, "Look here now, you can't tell me--to be specific--
-that little Miss ----- is the sort of a girl she should be."

"No," I replied frankly, "she is not. Were Miss ----- an
ordinary girl a good sound spanking would be of vast benefit to her and to
the motion picture industry as a whole."

"It is so easy--" there was a sneer in his tone. "--then why isn't it
done?"

"I will tell you why. In the days before motion pictures came into
vogue, Mama ----- , a blue-nosed Yankee [sic] woman, was a stock
actress of mediocre ability and with a sniveling brat on her hands. She never
knew whether her next week's booking would be in vaudeville or the poorhouse.
Can you imagine Mama -----'s feelings when this same brat jumped into
public popularity and a large salary because of a winsomeness which appealed
to motion picture audiences! Mama ----- now has diamonds, limousines,

a mansion and an English accent. And you would ask her to spank the source of this luxury!"

February 21, 1922
H. I. Phillips
NEW YORK GLOBE

Analyzing a Hollywood Clue

A new mystery woman has been brought into the investigation of William Desmond Taylor's murder. A garage man has told how a young woman, bareheaded and in evening gown, appeared to be fleeing from Los Angeles the night of the murder.

"She stopped at a garage in Ventura, Cal., at 3 A.M. and ordered all the gasoline and oil her car would hold," says the dispatch. "She had driven up at a terrific speed, her hair was blown awry, her face was pale and drawn, and she bit nervously at her gloves. She gave a bill in payment, and did not wait for change."

Maybe she shot Taylor, but her actions, according to the above account, were only those of a woman whose husband had become too helpless to drive, and who was doing her best to get him and the car home before sunrise. Probably, had the garage man looked, he would have seen him asleep on the floor of the car muttering: "Who shays I'm too drunk t' drive ish car? All right, then, you drive ish!"

March 12, 1922
BOSTON GLOBE

George Ade, who recently spent several weeks in Hollywood, tells an amusing story about the scramble of some of the film stars to appear "respectable" following the sensational stories recently coming out of Hollywood. According to Ade it got to be quite the fashion for youthful film stars to be photographed with their mothers in order to show how well they were protected.

"And do you know," says Ade, "some of the gelatine stars spent two or

three weeks finding where their mothers lived so that they could wire them to come to Hollywood to have their pictures taken."

* * * * *

February 13, 1922

Walter Anthony

SAN FRANCISCO BULLETIN

We wondered why a guard was placed around the home of Mary Miles Minter, following the publication of her passionate "I love you, I love you" letter to Taylor.

When Miss Minter broke into print in an interview the reason was clear. She, or some one wiser than she, surrounded her with guards to prevent her from talking for publication. Of the man who deserted his wife and baby and whose whole career is a mystery and a camouflage, Mary said:

"I don't believe he ever had a wife. He never told me he had, and our acquaintance was such that I'm sure he wouldn't deceive me. He could only be compared with God, he was so good."

Mary doesn't need a guard, she needs a gag.

* * * * *

February 8, 1922

Roy Moulton

NEW YORK MAIL

Twinkle, Little Movie Star, How I Wonder Where You Are!

The motto of the fillum colony seems to be "Fillum up again." But that doesn't lead us any closer to the solution of the crime. We are now getting our own news from Hollywood and in the rush of getting out an afternoon paper we are obliged to present it in a sort of disjointed way, mingling the strictly editorial utterances with the news items. That such a thing could happen in the motion picture colony is shocking and unexpected. To begin with, according to my reports from the scene, everybody is agreed that the victim was not fond of any woman, didn't associate with them and was practically a hermit. Never a breath, you understand--

FLASH: Quantities of silk lingerie and negligee found in bureau drawers

of bungalow. Silk nighties neatly folded, some with hairpins in them.

TO EDITORS--ADD FLASH--Taylor did not wear silk nighties or hairpins. The plot thickens.

Miss Mazie Tabasco, prominent and beautiful screen star, told the police today that she never knew Taylor, never saw him and that he did not tell her he was going to beat up his valet. Miss Tabasco last appeared in 1909 in "The Tribulations of Tillie." She maintained under close questioning that she never heard of Taylor. Nobody in the film colony ever heard of her. So it looks like a draw.

Bill Taylor was a man's man. Everybody in the movie colony knew that. He associated with men who did embroidery and knitting and point lace. All the love letters in the bungalow were tied with blue baby ribbon.

ADD MAZIE TABASCO: Miss Tabasco wore a charming mink coat and rolled stockings when questioned by the police. She was almost overcome by emotion but was not too weak to be photographed.

Miss Juniper Berry, a beautiful screen star, was bewitchingly dressed as she alighted from her motor in front of police headquarters this morning, where she went to volunteer what information she didn't have concerning the crime. She wore a saucy turban with red cherries, a mauve sport coat. She didn't know a thing about the crime, but the photographers got some excellent pictures. Miss Berry is one of the most prominent unknown screen actresses in the country. She is looking for a job.

FLASH: The gun was a .38-caliber. Important.

ADD FLASH: Jealousy was the cause. A well-known actor was in love with a beautiful actress who had an ice cream soda with Taylor three years ago, and he swore vengeance. He will be arrested before night, but we don't know what night.

FLASH: It has been definitely proven that jealousy was not the cause. The actress mentioned is Miss Hyacinth De Vere. She never met Taylor, and she says it was not an ice cream soda she had with him that day anyhow, but a nut sundae.

IMPORTANT: Miss June Bugg, the beautiful film favorite, has hastened

here to deny a statement that has never been made to the effect that she was in the bungalow at the time of the murder. She was in Kansas City that night. She indignantly denies that she was engaged to Taylor. Nobody ever said she was, and the incident has been dropped.

"I loved him with all my heart and soul," sobbed Miss Lutie Bibbins, the beautiful film star, after she had fought her way into police headquarters to give her version of the affair. "I loved him, but there was nothing sentimental about it. We were just good pals." Miss Bibbins wore attractive furs and a Paris suit, also galoshes with buttons not buttoned. She carried a walking stick with gold head incrustated with diamonds.

FLASH: Miss Ida Frothingham, the well-known and beautiful screen star, informed the police today that Miss Bibbins had never seen Taylor in her life. "I am the one who gave him the \$1,800 ebony cigarette holder," said Miss Frothingham. "He was my best friend and I am all busted up. If you have got to get my picture don't get a profile. I am simply overwhelmed."

Others who denied to the police today that they were engaged to Taylor were Misses Ivy Stump, Hazel Wood, Rose Bush, Celludid St. Claire, Amethyst Binks, Geraldine Gimme, Minnie Maggie Mudge, Tapioca Todd and Lucille Luscious.

One hundred and thirty-seven beautiful film stars denied themselves to callers today. The plot thickens.

Miss Anastasia Hash, prominent and beautiful film star, volunteered some important evidence to the police today. Miss Hash's story was as follows, taken from stenographic notes:

"I passed right by the bungalow three evenings before the crime and I didn't see a thing. I got this sable coat in Paris. I never met Mr. Taylor. My next picture will be produced by the Punkart people. I have never been in love."

Miss Oleomargarine Pipp, the beautiful film star, told the police today: "I had lunch with Mr. Taylor in 1919 in Los Angeles. I didn't notice anything wrong with him then. I have not seen him since."

FLASH--IMPORTANT: The bungalow was built of wood.

FLASH: New and important witness sought. He is a man high up in the screen profession--very high indeed. He does airplane stunts. Evidence is very strong against him as the possible murderer, as he was in New York at the time of the shooting.

Miss Gardenia Geranium Julap, the well-known and beautiful screen star, is hastening to Hollywood from Alaska to be interviewed. She was there on location at the time of the crime and never heard of Taylor before. She is on the verge of a nervous breakdown.

The police believe they have rounded up nearly everybody who doesn't know anything about the crime and who never knew Taylor.

Was it jealousy? Was it business rivalry? Did some woman hire an assassin to fire the bullet? Was it a holdup?

One feature of the thing has baffled the police from the start. There doesn't seem to be any woman mixed up in it.

And then again, it has come to a pretty pass when the movie colony cannot pull off a murder or two without the police getting all steamed up over it.

Please pass the smelling salts.

* * * * *

February 13, 1922

Herb Westen

SAN FRANCISCO CALL-POST

(Los Angeles)--Out of a population of 567,000 today in this city there are 575,996 amateur and professional detectives seeking the murderer of Taylor.

Out of the remaining four two are deaf, dumb and blind and do not read the newspapers; one left town this morning and the fourth is--the slayer himself.

The sleuthing fever is at a high heat and book stores report a phenomenal run on Sherlock Holmes, Craig Kennedy and the lurid Nick Carter.

With the incentive of two \$1000 rewards, one offered by a local newspaper and the other by the Screen Writers' Guild, everyone is suspicious

of everyone else and the chief of police is considering ordering everyone but the slayer to wear a badge.

Tall Tales #3: The Atlantic City Confession

March 5, 1922

Edward Doherty

SYRACUSE POST-STANDARD

Police Say Educated Man Sent Letter of Confession

Out of the hundreds of letters touching on the William Desmond Taylor murder mystery that have come to the Los Angeles authorities, one was selected today for investigation.

It was written by a man who says he committed the murder out of revenge. The letter was sent special delivery.

Captain David L. Adams of the detective bureau, while keeping secret the name of the writer, declares the man is evidently a scholar. "I am confident the writer will be under arrest in 24 hours," Captain Adams said. "I am convinced that the writer is not a fanatic."

* * * * *

March 12, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Taylor Death Note Revealed

The startling letter of "confession" received by Captain of Detectives David L. Adams last Saturday is the only letter out of many hundreds received at police headquarters that is receiving the serious attention of Captain Adams.

The letter in question is as follows:

"Hotel Traymore, Atlantic City, N. J.

"As I am of the opinion that the JUST murder of ONE W. D. Taylor has just a bit too much limelight and that he is being defended by too many duped friends, I take it upon myself to write these few lines to you, for I have

accomplished my purpose by killing the DIRTY CUR, and even this is a mild description of the man who had hidden behind a clean, polite and polished personality.

"This much, my dear friend, I will inform you, not one of the women whose names have been brought into this affair had anything to do with his death, nor his secretary and valet, Peavey could, in my own personal opinion, say much of W. D.'s relations with several women callers, although W. D. never had him remain all night at his home.

"Just nine years ago Taylor entered into my wife's life and always a lover of everything that was good and an admirer of a real gentleman, she was very soon under my friend's GOOD INFLUENCE, and here, Captain, I might add that Taylor was my friend.

"He always at first made it his business to gain the complete confidence of all his women. As to my wife she fairly worshiped him, and while I was a good husband and tidy I had not the personality that W. D. had. My wife soon fell to contrasting the two of us and would tell me I should do so and so and be like so and so, and so on until I began to spend my evenings at the club because it became too irksome at home, and because I was too much of a gentleman to ask W. D. to leave until his visit, which in truth was a vacation, had expired, for he was my guest by invitation.

"But, oh H--, Captain, why should I bother you with so much detail; suffice it to say (here follows story of alleged relations between Taylor and the writer's wife).

"He had wanted my wife as he had wanted other women that took his fancy. He was a gentleman always to all persons outwardly. And he went about it by acts of kindness and charity to such a degree that he convinced even the most skeptical, and now, Captain, in the midst of my condemnation of the man, I ask you not to lose sight of the fact that W. D. played four women and a girl at one time and had the complete confidence of each and had each visit him separately, and yet played each so skillfully that they each of them were absolutely convinced that he had only their future welfare in mind at all times, and so gained their complete confidence and later their affection

though his by-play of friendship and paternal interest.

"Until he became involved with (mentioning the name of a film actress) I was inclined to let him go because in time I think (another luminary of the film world) would have gotten him in revenge, for she was the only woman who saw at least partly through W. D., and I think a little later intended to compel W. D. to do her bidding, for he meant much to her both in financial and other ways, for ----, like Taylor, enjoys both freedom and a good name, and she could go a long ways toward making a bargain with a man like Taylor.

"The three women connected with Taylor (here follows a bitter denunciation of both Taylor and the women named). But the other actress was a good girl, and as I and my wife knew Taylor well enough to know that he would get her and my wife swore to me that if he did she would kill him, I thought it about time to take a hand myself, for I had sworn to get Taylor some day, but in a way that I would never hang for it, and so I set about planning how, and here, Captain, I might add that in spite of all any one tells you to the contrary (that W. D. feared no one) he lived constantly in fear that I would some day get him, for he knew me well and he feared more than ever when he learned that my wife's love had turned to hate, for he knew her, too.

"South American women, you know, can hate as deeply and intensely as they can love, and with all his smooth personality he was not diplomatic enough to carry her along with others as he did his American women. There are two facts that have been overlooked to date, Captain. They are these:

"We had been living in the central section of the financial district at a hotel on Spring Street and were out in the colony daily and only on one occasion did we let Taylor see us, and that only after we had made a careful study of his everyday habits and life as he lived.

"I even came East on two occasions on the same train. Well, Captain, what is the use of detail? I return again to the two facts. On the afternoon of the night of the killing we borrowed a friend's car and drove to the home of another acquaintance near Venice. We returned to L.A. and changed clothes and dined.

"We then drove out to Hollywood to within two squares of W. D.'s home

and left the car and proceeded on foot up Alvarado. Being familiar with the time Peavey left, we intended to go in on Taylor after he was alone. I had pass keys to both the front and back doors. Seeing a woman coming down the street we separated, my wife turned away from Alvarado and circled and I struck off up the street and behind shrubbery and foliage.

"The woman, I believe, was a nurse and I believe saw me, but owing to the distance and the way I had my muffler and cap she could never recognize me anyhow. A car was at the curb and I joined my wife at the back of the house.

"I let my wife in the back door. My wife went to the living room, where she listened unobserved, and then I slipped the front door, and any one at all could have seen me do it. Taylor returned and went to the drawer of the table and put a letter there from his pocket and turned and sat down in the chair, where he remarked to himself:

" 'I wish I were away from there. This ---- place is getting on my nerves, and most of all, these ---- women.' (Follows an alleged opinion upon the part of Taylor concerning some of his friends.)

"Then my wife stepped into the room and I with her and she spoke to him and she said:

" 'Well, well, William dear, I see you still have a little influence over women.'

"He said, 'God, I knew it.' and turned and I fired. As he fell forward he called my wife by name and said he knew she would do it but he would rather have her do it, for it was her that he had hurt more than any one he ever knew and deserved it. He did not die for fully fifteen minutes, and what few things he said concerned only us.

"For a few minutes my wife's old infatuation came back to her and she knelt beside him and cried, and then laid him out tenderly. God, man, but women are mysterious creatures.

"I woke her up by telling her we were guilty of murder and so far were a long way from safe as we had planned. She cursed the fool and put her cloak around her and I went out back to see if everything was clear. Oh, by the

way, I forgot to mention that we were both inside when the chauffeur for W. D. came up and we watched him go away. I sent the wife out the back way and she went around the block and I walked out the front door and down Alvarado Street.

"The wife was sitting in the car and I got in and drove to L.A. We did not go right back to the hotel, but took in a moving picture because the girl was nervous. Then back to the hotel.

"Wife continued nervous and I realized that she had best get away. Sent her in car to friends at Santa ----. She did not change clothes still having on evening gown. Bell-boy took a grip down to car for us and I bid her good-bye. Checked out next day and joined her. We then came back and took train for Chicago. From Chi to Buffalo. Left her in Toronto and I came to New York, from there to here.

"Have settled business interests here and in N.Y. and now on way to ----. Could do a lot towards clearing up things but there is no such thing as immunity for a self confessed murderer and I believe I did a just thing and if not God in his good time will punish me.

"When you receive this I shall be on the high seas and I have very powerful influence where my wife and I are going, and what is the use of California spending so much money goose chasing? I would like to see you get the reward Capt. but under circumstances must disappoint you. Am writing to you because you are the only one out of all connected that will stick to your own deductions and convictions. There were only two people who knew who killed W. D. and when you receive this there will be three. The more you investigate along wrong paths the more you hurt the M.P. Industry.

"Adieu captain."

The name of the man signed to the alleged confession is that of a person well known in picture circles.

* * * * *

March 8, 1922

MEMPHIS COMMERCIAL APPEAL

(Los Angeles)--Police detectives assigned to the William Desmond Taylor

murder mystery announced they had discarded the "confession" recently mailed here from Atlantic City, N.J., as the work of an unsound mind.

They declared that the handwriting of the man whose name was signed to the "confession" said to be a prominent figure in the motion picture industry, in no way corresponds to that in which the correspondence was written.

* * * * *

(to be continued)

NEXT ISSUE:

"Hollywood Mysteries"--Shredded

"The Humor of a Hollywood Murder" Part 8:

Confessions, Confessions, Poetry Potpourri, The Public Speaks;

Epilogue: August 1923

NOTES:

[1] According to Florabel Muir in *Headline Happy*, this episode was masterminded by Frank Carson, and the "ghost" was Al Weinshank, who would later become one of the victims of the St. Valentine's Day Massacre.

For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

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